

Submitter: Katherin Kirkpatrick
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB210

Please support SB 210.

Electoral integrity is a nonpartisan issue. It is widely known that our state elections are in a terrible state because technology has failed and probably cannot be made to succeed.

Five years ago, NPR broke the news that Oregon's Elections Director at the time, Stephen Trout, had written to the candidates for the office that oversaw him, warning that digital voting in Oregon was in a dire state:

"....Of the 56 known bugs or problems, eight have been completed, eight have failed leaving 40 not done. Many of these projects have been talked about and/or worked on for years but never finished. Most of the projects that have been completed in the past couple of years have had to be undone because there were changes made that resulted in breaking other things. Elections Division staff has a lack of confidence in IT services and is frustrated that whenever a project is undertaken it often makes things worse.

"In 2018 the agency requested legislative approval to spend \$3,250,453 of 2018 federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) funds on seven projects (Exhibit A). Only one of those seven projects have been completed over two and a half years later. The one thing that was done was two permanent IT Security positions were hired. I am unaware of anything those two security positions have done to help elections. They have not provided any reports, even when I have requested them from the IT Director and Chief of Staff. When alerts come in from federal partners saying vulnerabilities have been identified in our systems, I get no reports or engagement from the agency security team. I have to find out about attacks on our systems from national briefings or partners instead of from my agency. I received my first election security update of the election from the agency at 7:52pm on election night. It was based on an alert that was sent out identifying malicious IP addresses that should be blocked. The scary part is other alerts with IP addresses and needed patches and other vulnerabilities had been coming out pretty much daily through October, and sometimes multiple alerts during a day, with some specific to Oregon. To my knowledge nothing was done and it does not appear that they were even being monitored.

"I can't succeed with the current state of technology and lack of support in the agency. I don't believe anyone will be able to succeed."

A few months earlier, on November 3, 2019, similar observations were made by multiple public figures on a 20 minute expose by television host John Oliver, at the time a Democrat Party supporter, who shortly thereafter became a naturalized citizen who votes Democrat. His informative and entertaining piece continues to circulate on social media to this date. Its punchline, a quote from President Trump, a Republican, whom Mr. Oliver dislikes, but found himself in agreement with about voting systems:

"One of the things we're learning is that it's always good--it's old fashioned, but it's always good--to have a paper backup system of voting."

To uproarious laughter and applause, Oliver marveled that there could be no disagreement on this issue.

He was right.

And he was from the left.

Please do the right, and left, thing. Show the citizens of Oregon bipartisan support for in-person voting via SB 210.

Thank you.