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

Requiring in-person voting only and only on election day would be borderline catastrophic for Oregonians who live in rural areas or areas that may be weather-impacted during election season. Polling places such as town halls or libraries, post offices could be at risk of funding in our current political climate and could be potentially several miles from many Oregonians in these more remote areas of our State. This is further exacerbated by the lack of public transit in many parts of Oregon. The high cost of transportation living in these areas could create a barrier for potential voters and limit their ability to participate in the democratic process of voting as they should be and currently would be able to by mail.

I strongly believe the right to vote applies to EVERYONE, and any attempt to restrict, limit, hinder or otherwise discourage ANYONE from voting is not only unconstitutional, but also un-American.

Oregonians were the first in the country to move to an all-vote-by-mail system in 1998 when Oregon voters approved Measure 60 by a margin 69.39% to 30.61%, with about 1.1M votes cast. This was epic landslide and a clear call from Oregonians of their desire for what they wanted for their democracy.

Oregon's vote-by-mail system has worked excellently for literal decades. It saves counties and our State money with the lowest cost per vote in the country. Vote-by-mail has been repeatedly proven to be safe and encourages greater civic engagement, which Oregonians are proud of and do not want to see tampered with. Oregonians demonstrate their civic duty through this system and are repeatedly in the top ten State's for voter turnout. This bill seems intent on trying to limit Oregonians rather than strengthen the system.

<https://www.democracydocket.com/analysis/the-cost-of-voting/>
<https://publicintegrity.org/politics/elections/us-polling-places/oregon-voting-by-mail-strong-for-decades/>

Election integrity is something Oregon takes seriously and has through the history of the vote-by-mail system by the Oregon Secretary of State and their partners at the Federal and State/County levels. Multiple reports and investigations have yet to find any systematic level of fraud which cannot be said by many other states.

<https://sos.oregon.gov/elections/Pages/security.aspx>
<https://www.opb.org/article/2024/09/20/opb-politics-now-oregons-vaunted-vote-by-mail-system-has-a-rare-error/>

<https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/lfo/Documents/2020%20Issue%20Review%20-%20Oregon%20Vote%20by%20Mail.pdf>

I encourage those supporting this bill to consider the logistical and financial nightmare of having 4.2 million people taking a day off to overwhelm polling booths. This would disenfranchise Oregonians as Election Day is not a protected holiday, and time to vote is not required of employers both federally or by Oregon state law. Nationwide we've seen long polling lines, actions to intimidate and threaten election safety and security. Why would we introduce opportunities to weaken a system that has been proven as one of the most secure in our nation?

<https://www.shrm.org/topics-tools/tools/hr-answers/obligated-to-give-employees-time-work-to-vote>

Does Senator David Brock Smith have a plan to run more polling facilities? The bill shows that it, "May Have Fiscal Impact, But No Statement Yet Issued." Oregon had the lowest Cost of Voting Index value in 2024 with universal mail-in ballots. Does Senator Smith have a plan to cover the additional cost to push us to the other end of the Index?

<https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/10.1089/elj.2024.0037>

I strongly oppose SB210 and call you keep Oregon's mail-in voting system intact.