

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

Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of ballots by mail and in opposition to in-person voting as the primary method of election participation. As a concerned citizen and advocate for accessible, secure, and efficient elections, I firmly believe that voting by mail is the best approach to ensuring that every eligible voter has the opportunity to participate in democracy without unnecessary barriers.

Ensuring Accessibility and Participation

Voting by mail provides a safe, convenient, and accessible method for voters, including seniors, people with disabilities, rural voters, working families, and those with limited transportation options. Unlike in-person voting, which requires individuals to take time off work, travel to polling locations, and sometimes stand in long lines, mail-in ballots allow voters to cast their votes at their convenience without fear of scheduling conflicts, mobility challenges, or inclement weather.

Enhancing Election Security and Integrity

Despite misinformation to the contrary, vote-by-mail systems have been proven to be secure through strict ballot tracking, signature verification, and anti-fraud safeguards. States that have implemented universal mail voting, including Oregon, Colorado, and Washington, have demonstrated that the process reduces errors, increases voter confidence, and eliminates many risks associated with in-person voting, such as voter suppression, machine malfunctions, and election day disruptions.

Reducing Administrative Burden and Costs

Mail-in voting significantly reduces the costs and logistical challenges of running polling stations, hiring temporary election workers, and maintaining voting machines. It also distributes the voting period over several weeks, easing the burden on election officials and reducing the likelihood of long lines, last-minute technical failures, and confusion at polling places.

Rejecting In-Person Voting as the Default Method

While in-person voting should remain an option for those who need it, making it the primary method places unnecessary burdens on voters and election officials.

Restricting voting to in-person locations disproportionately impacts marginalized communities, discourages voter participation, and opens the door to disenfranchisement through polling place closures, long wait times, and restrictive ID laws.

Conclusion

Voting by mail is a proven, secure, and accessible method that strengthens democracy by making voting easier, not harder. I urge this committee to reject policies that limit vote-by-mail options and instead expand access to mail ballots to ensure that every voter, regardless of their circumstances, can fully participate in our elections.

Thank you for your time and consideration.