

Submitter:

Alex Lawson

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB210

Vote by mail has been one of the most successful projects in our nation's history. It has a vanishingly low rate of fraud, increases voter participation dramatically, and allows many citizens to vote who would not otherwise be able to - particularly those whose employment or health are practical barriers to them attending in-person voting. The primary effect of repealing vote by mail is to effectively disenfranchise these voters, at a time when key government protections and services that they rely on are being dismantled, through legislative and other means. This measure is a blatantly undemocratic attempt to silence voters in order to make it easier to pass unpopular policies that will harm them.

Proponents will argue that the intent of the measure is to reduce fraud, and point to the alternative provisions for mail-in voting upon request by those with extenuating circumstances. However, the introduction of unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles and costs to the voting process (for citizens as well as the state) is always directly correlated to a reduction in voter participation, particularly among low-income and disabled voters. Many voters don't have time, energy or other resources required to submit additional paperwork, provide repeated and redundant verification of their identities, or take time to travel to polling places and wait to vote in person. The bill's sponsors and proponents are well aware of this. There is no significant pattern of fraud in our vote by mail system. In fact, it's consistently held as an example of highly successful civic process. The bill's sponsors and proponents are well aware of this, also.

This bill's predictable impact, and in fact its intended purpose, is to disenfranchise voters. We must reject it in order to preserve the function of our democracy.