

To our duly elected officials,

Changing the voting process from mail-in to in-person voting would adversely affect the ability of many to participate in a Democracy that now, more than ever, needs the people's voices to be heard.

Voting in person would drastically reduce the participation of those who have become accustomed to the mail-in voting process. Being able to take the time to sit down with your ballot and thoughtfully research the measures and candidates with no outside pressure helps to ensure that the voter's choices aren't influenced by the possible duress of other people. While we know there are laws against campaigning in the vicinity of polling locations we also know that enforcement of those are spotty at best in other states that have strict voting laws. The security of voting by mail has been proven. There doesn't have to be a vetting of citizens who are charged maintaining the security of the process because we know that the more people that are involved, the more chances there are for a fault in the process.

Voting at by mail is simple and more importantly, accessible. Voting is a RIGHT. Making the process more difficult is disabling and discriminatory. It discriminates against those who may not be able to take the time off, even though it is the law, to go an vote. It adds a layer of difficulty and complexity for those who are unable to move on their own, or are bedridden. These are the citizens whose votes need to be counted the most because they are usually the ones most affected by public policies that are on the ballot. Those that have the privilege to take the day off, or are in good health and have access to transportation at any time aren't as affected by most ballot measures. Voting is a RIGHT and not a privilege that every citizen has.

Voting in person adds the layers of complexity of organizing a one-day event that must be monitored, safe and secure for all participants. There must be accommodations made for those of us who aren't physically able to stand in line for what could be hours. The fiscal cost of this would be more than what conducting an election is now. Voting in person would add an unnecessary step in the process that would cost more as this adds complexity and extra human resources to a system that already exists. Voting in person would make the process more exclusive rather than inclusive. Voting is a RIGHT in a democratic society and it should strive to include ALL citizens and not just a few.

Thank you for your attention,
Ronald San Pedro
Co-owner, operator PDX Donerland food cart