

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

My name is Nathan Schenk, and I am a resident of Salem, Oregon. I am writing to express my strong opposition to Senate Bill 210, which seeks to eliminate Oregon's established mail-in voting system in favor of mandatory in-person voting.?

Benefits of Mail-In Voting:

Increased Voter Turnout:

Mail-in voting has been instrumental in boosting voter participation. For instance, in the 1996 Oregon special election to fill a U.S. Senate seat, over 66% of registered voters cast their ballots by mail, a significant increase compared to traditional in-person voting methods.

Source: <https://archive.fairvote.org/turnout/mail.htm>

Enhanced Voter Convenience and Engagement:

By allowing voters to receive and return ballots by mail, individuals have extended time to thoroughly review and consider their choices. This flexibility enables voters to research candidates and issues more comprehensively, leading to more informed electoral decisions. Additionally, for voters who prefer not to return their ballots by mail, Oregon provides secure drop boxes throughout the state, ensuring accessibility and convenience while maintaining security.

Security and Integrity of Mail-In Voting:

Concerns about the security of mail-in voting are often overstated. Evidence indicates that mail-in voting is secure and less susceptible to fraud than commonly perceived:?

Low Incidence of Fraud:

A comprehensive analysis of mail-in ballots from the 2016 and 2018 general elections in Colorado, Oregon, and Washington revealed a minuscule rate of potential voter fraud, ranging from 0.0014% to 0.004%. This data underscores the rarity of fraudulent activities in mail-in voting systems.

Source: https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/minuscule-number-of-potentially-fraudulent-ballots-in-states-with-universal-mail-voting-undercuts-trump-claims-about-election-risks/2020/06/08/1e78aa26-a5c5-11ea-bb20-ebf0921f3bbd_story.html

Robust Verification Processes:

Oregon employs stringent security measures, including signature verification, to ensure the integrity of mail-in ballots. Election officials meticulously compare the signature on each ballot envelope with those on file, a process designed to detect

and deter fraudulent submissions. ?

Transparency and Accountability:

The mail-in voting process in Oregon is characterized by transparency and multiple layers of security. Ballot handling procedures involve bipartisan teams, secure collection boxes, and detailed logs to account for every ballot, ensuring a transparent and accountable system. ?

Conclusion:

Oregon's mail-in voting system has proven to be a secure, efficient, and effective method of conducting elections, fostering higher voter turnout and greater civic engagement. The implementation of SB210 would dismantle a system that has served our state well for decades, replacing it with a less convenient method without substantive evidence of increased security or integrity. I urge the committee to consider the substantial benefits of our current mail-in voting system and to oppose SB210.?

Sincerely,

Nathan Schenk