

Submitter:

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On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB210

Universal mail-in voting is one of the best things about this states electoral process, making it much easier for all voters to participate in our elections and be more thoughtful about their votes. It gives voters time to research all available candidates and provides an interface for voting that is convenient and accessible, ensuring that no matter what your circumstances you have an opportunity for your voice to be heard and for you to try to elect the people that best represent you. Additionally, we have robust systems of signature verification and ballot tracking to give voters confidence that their vote is being correctly received and counted.

This bill would turn that system on its head and have us go from having one of the most accessible voting systems to one of the most restrictive overnight. Not only would this bill mandating in-person voting but it would also imposing substantial identification requirements, both of which drive down turnout particularly among minority populations. Mail-in voting is the primary reason why our state has some of the highest voter participation numbers in the country and we should be proud of that. The idea that a system that will demonstrably result in less engagement especially from the more marginalized communities in the state is somehow better than our current mail-in voting system should be considered at best naively alarmist, and at worst a blatant attempt to disenfranchise voters these people simply do not agree with and sow further distrust in our systems of government.

Since this bill is being advanced under the auspices of election security, I would urge that the sponsor demonstrate some evidence of widespread flaws in our current voting system before introducing drastic changes that will negatively affect turnout and participation. In other words State Senator Smith, if you have hard evidence (i.e. not the anecdotal ramblings of ill-informed people on social media) that there are gaps in our current mail-in voting system that could result in widespread fraud then please show that evidence so that we can have a serious conversation about how to further secure our elections while maintaining engagement. Regardless, this bill should be dismissed outright as ill-conceived nonsense, and potentially an attempt to give legitimacy and a platform to unfounded rumor and speculation about the supposed insecurity of mail-in voting.

The biggest danger to our voting system right now is not the threat of fraud, but the concerted effort by ideologues whose politics are at odds with the majority to entrench misguided suspicions in an attempt to create voting systems that disenfranchise the voters that are less likely to support their ideals.