

Submitter: Josefa Ovalle  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB210

Dear Members of the Committee,

My name is Josefa and I am a resident of Oregon. I am writing to strongly oppose the proposed measure to terminate mail-in voting in our state. Eliminating this essential voting method would be a grave mistake that threatens voter participation, accessibility, and election security.

Oregon's mail-in voting system has been a cornerstone of our democracy since it was implemented statewide in 2000. Over the past two decades, it has increased voter turnout, made elections more inclusive, and provided a reliable, secure, and accessible way for Oregonians to participate in our democratic process. Our state consistently ranks among the highest in voter participation, and much of this success is due to the convenience and accessibility of mail-in voting.

Terminating mail-in voting would disproportionately harm rural communities, people with disabilities, working families, the elderly, and those with limited access to transportation. These groups would face significant barriers to reaching in-person polling locations, resulting in decreased voter turnout and diminished representation. Voting should be a right accessible to all, not a privilege reserved for those who can overcome logistical challenges.

Furthermore, the security of Oregon's mail-in voting system is well-documented. The process includes multiple layers of verification, such as signature matching, secure ballot tracking, and transparent procedures that ensure accuracy and accountability. Despite frequent scrutiny, there is no credible evidence of widespread fraud or abuse within Oregon's vote-by-mail system. On the contrary, it has been lauded as a national model for safe and effective voting practices.

In addition to the risks to voter participation and security, eliminating mail-in voting would place an undue financial burden on the state. The cost of staffing and maintaining numerous in-person polling places would be significantly higher than the proven and cost-effective mail-in system. At a time when budgets are stretched, it makes no sense to increase expenses while reducing voter access.

Moreover, the proposed termination would undermine public trust in our electoral process by disrupting a long-standing and successful system without justification. Oregonians are accustomed to voting by mail and have come to rely on its convenience and efficiency. Ending this practice would cause confusion, frustration,

and doubt about the integrity of future elections.

Instead of dismantling a proven system, we should focus on strengthening it by expanding voter education, maintaining rigorous security measures, and ensuring all eligible voters can exercise their right without unnecessary obstacles. Our democracy is stronger when more voices are heard, and mail-in voting is an essential tool in achieving that goal.

For these reasons, I urge you to oppose the proposed measure and protect Oregon's vote-by-mail system. Thank you for considering my testimony.

Josefa Ovalle