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On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB210

Mail-in voting is a vital component of American democracy, enhancing accessibility, security, and participation across the electorate. Below are key reasons substantiating its importance, supported by authoritative sources:

Accessibility for Diverse Voter Groups

Mail-in voting ensures that individuals who may face challenges with in-person voting—such as military personnel stationed overseas, seniors, and people with disabilities—can participate in elections. Historically, during the Civil War, approximately 150,000 Union soldiers voted absentee in the 1864 presidential election. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/u-s-veterans-know-trust-need-vote-mail/>

For voters with disabilities, federal laws like the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) mandate equal access to the electoral process, ensuring accommodations are available.

https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/bestpractices/Accessibility_for_Voting_by_Mail_Part_III_Accessibility_Checklist.pdf?

Enhanced Security Measures

Mail-in voting incorporates multiple security features to maintain election integrity. Signature verification is a common method, with election officials comparing the signature on a mail ballot envelope to those on file to confirm voter identity. <https://voteathome.org/portfolio/stanford-law-school-report-signature-verification-and-mail-ballots-guaranteeing-access-while-preserving-integrity/>

Additionally, many states provide ballot tracking systems, allowing voters to monitor the status of their mail ballots, thereby increasing transparency and trust in the process. https://www.lgbtmap.org/democracy-maps/ballot_tracking_systems

Historical Precedent and Reliability

Mail-in voting has a longstanding history in the United States. Beyond military use, states like Oregon have successfully implemented all-mail voting systems for decades, demonstrating the method's reliability and effectiveness.

<https://sos.oregon.gov/elections/Pages/faq.aspx>

By facilitating broader participation and upholding rigorous security protocols, mail-in voting reinforces the democratic principle that every eligible citizen should have the opportunity to vote without unnecessary barriers.

<https://www.ncsl.org/elections-and-campaigns/table-14-how-states-verify-voted-absentee-mail-ballots>

<https://vote.gov/your-vote-is-safe>