

Submitter: Christopher Malin
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB210

Dear Members of the Committee:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to Senate Bill 210, which seeks to eliminate Oregon's vote-by-mail system. As an Oregon resident and voter, I believe this bill would significantly harm our state's exemplary voting system and disenfranchise countless Oregonians.

Oregon's Pioneering Success with Vote-by-Mail:

Oregon has been a national leader in vote-by-mail since becoming the first state to conduct all elections by mail in 1998. For over 25 years, our system has proven to be secure, accessible, and efficient. This successful track record should not be discarded lightly. Consider these facts:

- Oregon consistently ranks among the top states in voter turnout, with participation rates regularly exceeding the national average by 10 percentage points or more.
- Our system has processed millions of ballots with virtually no evidence of systematic fraud.
- Vote-by-mail has enjoyed strong bipartisan support throughout its implementation in Oregon.

Accessibility and Equity Concerns:

Eliminating mail-in voting would create significant barriers for many Oregonians:

- Rural voters who live far from polling locations would face substantial travel burdens
- Voters with disabilities or health conditions would encounter new obstacles to participation
- Working parents and those with inflexible job schedules would struggle to find time to vote in person
- Elderly voters who may have limited mobility or transportation options would be disproportionately affected

Financial: Impact

Transitioning away from our established vote-by-mail system would impose considerable costs on Oregon taxpayers:

- Establishing and staffing physical polling locations across the state
- Training poll workers and election officials on new procedures
- Purchasing new voting equipment compatible with in-person voting
- Increased security and administrative costs for election day operations

Security and Integrity:

Oregon's vote-by-mail system includes robust security measures:

- Signature verification processes that have proven highly effective at preventing fraud
- Ballot tracking systems that allow voters to monitor their ballot's status
- Transparent counting procedures with bipartisan observation
- Physical security measures protecting ballots during collection and counting

Public Trust and Confusion:

Abandoning a system that Oregonians have used successfully for 25 years would create unnecessary confusion and potentially undermine public trust in our elections. Our current system is well-understood by voters across the political spectrum.

Conclusion:

I urge this committee to reject Senate Bill 210. Oregon's vote-by-mail system is a model of accessible, secure, and efficient election administration. Rather than dismantling this successful system, we should be working to strengthen and improve it while maintaining the access and convenience that Oregon voters have come to expect and deserve.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher Malin