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On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB210

Mail-in voting provides us the opportunity to take our time, to study the ballot, and to make thoughtful choices - on the voter's schedule. It also facilitates participation by all, and not just by the ones with a flexible work schedule and quick and convenient transportation. If anything, mail-in voting is more democratic than the archaic in-person system.

Invariably, there's something on the ballot that requires careful thought and consideration, even a bit of research.

Case in point: The Columbia River levee positions, or something like that. I had no idea what they were about. However because i had time and resources at hand (at home), I could look it up. At a coffee shop a few days later, I overheard a couple of people researching these same positions. Encouraging sign.

Better example: Portland's new ranked choice system. It's not something one can rush. I changed my ranks probably five times over several days. Further, the actual ballot contained more names than I had read about in the news. Mail-in voting gave me the space to think about and read up on these people. Can you imagine the chaos if people had to carry into a booth their thick, marked up voter guides. Nuts.

I still vividly recall my years voting in Georgia. I'd rush to the polling station from the office during a break from calls - assuming I had not been pulled out of state on business. Despite efforts to study the ballot options in the days before, every time I'd discover on the ballot something unexpected, something not covered in the news. Often these would be poorly written summaries of amendments to the state constitution. I'd be forced to leave these choices blank, not willing to make a bad decision. Now that I thankfully live in a mail-in state, I no longer have this worry.

In these times when democracy is under threat the absolute last thing we need to be doing is making it harder for people to participate. Kill this idea to limit voting by making it in-person. Kill it now.