

Submitter: Melissa Day

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB210

As a person who lives in a rural area, relatively far away from any polling places, mail-in voting is very important to me. Driving to a polling location in order to conduct the entire voting process is inconvenient, and I would have to take time off work to do it, since Election Day is not a holiday and does not have any work-release days associated with it. This inconvenience would disproportionately affect working Americans such as myself, and those of us who do not live conveniently close to polling locations -- especially those who do not have easy access to a car.

Furthermore, receiving my mail-in ballot well ahead of Election Day gives me the best possible opportunity to research my candidates before casting my vote. The Voters' Pamphlet itself offers information on ALL possible state and local candidates in the area, but it does not tell each voter which specific candidates apply to their eligible districts, so there is a lot of extraneous information to sort through. Being able to fill in my ballot gradually, even over a course of days, allows me to vote from as knowledgeable a place as possible, rather than just going by gut reaction while at the polling place, or abstaining on a vote because I was not well informed enough before showing up.

I understand that this proposed measure is being made in the interest of election security, but I do not see how it will substantially solve any election-security problems:

1. First of all, election fraud is a statistically insignificant issue. The actual procedure of casting ballots has not introduced anomalies significant enough to impact elections, generally speaking. The idea that this is a pervasive problem is way overblown.
2. Second, we have to be registered to vote in order to receive our ballots, so there are no unregistered persons receiving ballots addressed to their name. The signature-verification process helps guard against ballot forgery, which could only be successfully pulled off if the forger successfully imitates the voter's signature; in other words, the only way a ballot could be fraudulently cast is if the fraudulent caster is someone who has access to the fraud victim's address and can adequately recreate their signature.

In conclusion, canceling mail-in voting would disproportionately harm legal, working voters, in order to provide an unneeded obstacle, which will provide little to no meaningful improvement to the security of our elections. It's a scorched-earth solution to a problem that can be improved with minor tweaks.

If we desire a higher degree of personal verification at voting time, other methods can be used that add additional verification steps without completely getting rid of mail-in voting. For example, we could have the option of verifying other information next to our ballot signature, such as our birth date. Or there could be an option to log into an app to upload a picture of legal documentation (such as an ID or pay stub), or we could have the option to include a photo copy of such information with our ballot. There are other ways to add meaningful, effective layers of additional security, without compromising our basic access to our own ballots.