

Submitter:

Nicole James

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB210

I strongly oppose this bill, which would eliminate mail-in voting in Oregon.

Vote by mail has been widely demonstrated to increase legal voters' access to voting, and has not been seen to undermine fair and legal elections. To put it simply: vote by mail is the obvious best choice if we want legal voters to be able to vote, and despite the misinformation that has been sowed in some small communities, it does not have any actual downsides.

The democracy of our state and country relies on all citizens having the ability to choose to vote. If this bill were to pass and we were to require in-person voting, it would disenfranchise large parts of tax paying, rule-abiding citizens who have the right to vote without putting their jobs and households at risk. The current economy is such that we cannot rely on people having vacation days, sick days, or a day off when they could vote early--many people work multiple jobs such that they do not have a day off, and working multiple part time jobs means individuals do not have benefits like vacation or sick days where they may be able to arrange to vote early. Having grown up in rural Oregon myself, I remember how razor thin our budget was at times and how difficult it was to find the time and gas money to go to the grocery store--an extra 50-mile drive to a polling place would have been impossible.

Eliminating mail in voting would unnecessarily make it much harder for everyone to vote, to the extent that low income and rural families become at risk of being practically unable to exercise their constitutional right to vote. It is well demonstrated that mail in voting offers just, legal, and fair elections. There is no risk associated with keeping mail in voting, and there are many risks associated with repealing it.

I oppose this bill.