

Submitter:

Theresa Whisenhunt

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB210

I strongly OPPOSE SB 210 which would eliminate Oregon's vote by mail elections and instead require the majority of voters to appear in person at polling places on election day. This would be a cumbersome and expensive proposition that would discourage voter participation. Oregon's vote by mail system is easy to use and enables everyone to vote from their home at a time that is convenient for them. There is a process to register to vote that has been successful for Oregon residence for many years. In my review looking for instances of voter fraud due to registration/use of mail-in ballots, I found that improperly registered residence were due to DMV errors not residence in-mass fraud of the mail-in voting system that Oregon has.

An in person voting requirement that takes place only on election day is physically demanding, difficult for working people to make it to the polls and voters may be discouraged from voting due to bad weather; not to mention the elderly and disabled groups in our communities who would be UNABLE to go to a physical voting place. Additionally the costs and staffing of polling places in each precinct would be prohibitive under this bill. It requires potentially seven paid staffers at each polling place of different political parties for a minimum of 12 hours. It's almost impossible to find that many available people willing to work at a polling place for just one day. Not to mention the difficulty of locating polling places. Schools are no longer used as polling locations due to the risk to students of that many strangers on their school grounds and our local libraries are being closed or hours reduced due to funding. Also additional expense will be required to purchase multiple physical polling booths for each precinct which will only be used rarely and will need to be transported and stored. Oregon currently has a very cost effective and convenient way for the most voters to participate in the electoral process by voting by mail. Please do not ruin this excellent system by replacing it with this proposed requirement of in-person voting. Thank you for considering my testimony.