

Submitter: Vance Chauncey
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB210

Opposition Testimony to Oregon Senate Bill 210

I am writing to express my unequivocal opposition to Senate Bill 210 (SB210), introduced in the 2025 Regular Session of the Oregon Legislature. This bill proposes a fundamental shift in our state's electoral process by making in-person voting on Election Day the standard method, requiring voters to present government-issued photo identification, and limiting vote-by-mail options to specific circumstances. These changes threaten to undermine the accessibility, inclusivity, and efficiency that have long characterized Oregon's voting system.

Erosion of Oregon's Vote-by-Mail Success

Oregon has been a pioneer in implementing a vote-by-mail system that has demonstrably increased voter participation and ensured secure, efficient elections. Transitioning to predominantly in-person voting disregards the success of this system and imposes unnecessary barriers on voters. The proposed shift could lead to decreased voter turnout, longer wait times at polling stations, and increased administrative costs associated with establishing and maintaining in-person voting infrastructure statewide.

Disenfranchisement of Vulnerable Populations

The requirement for government-issued photo identification disproportionately affects marginalized communities, including low-income individuals, the elderly, and people with disabilities. Obtaining such identification can be a significant hurdle due to financial constraints, mobility issues, or bureaucratic obstacles. Implementing this requirement risks disenfranchising eligible voters who are unable to meet these stringent criteria, thereby undermining the democratic principles of equity and inclusion.

Limitation of Vote-by-Mail Options

Restricting vote-by-mail to electors unable to vote in person on Election Day, as well as military and overseas voters, ignores the diverse needs of Oregon's electorate. Many voters rely on vote-by-mail for reasons unrelated to absence, such as health concerns, caregiving responsibilities, or work commitments. By narrowing the eligibility for mail-in ballots, SB210 fails to accommodate the legitimate needs of many Oregonians, potentially reducing overall voter participation.

Potential Conflicts with Oregon's Commitment to Accessible Elections

Oregon has a proud history of implementing policies that promote voter access and participation. SB210 represents a regressive step that conflicts with our state's commitment to making voting as accessible as possible for all eligible citizens. The proposed changes could lead to legal challenges and public outcry, diverting resources from more pressing issues facing our state.

Conclusion

Senate Bill 210 poses significant threats to the integrity and inclusivity of Oregon's electoral process. By dismantling our successful vote-by-mail system, imposing restrictive identification requirements, and limiting mail-in voting options, this bill stands to disenfranchise countless voters and erode public confidence in our elections. I urge lawmakers to reject SB210 and instead focus on policies that enhance voter access and uphold the democratic values that Oregon has long championed.