

Submitter:

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On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB210

There is no compelling reason to accept Republican State Sen. Brock Smith's bill to overhaul Oregon's mail-in voting system. Researchers at the Univ. of Virginia, among others, have found no evidence that mail-in voting advantages one party over another, but did find that it can serve to increase voter turnout - which is what any functioning Democracy should want. The often cited issue of voter fraud in regard to all mail-in voting has yet to be substantiated by any research or reviews in specific districts. When this issue is examined, we consistently find such an insignificantly small number of fraudulent votes that it does not stand out from in-person voter fraud. No matter how many times Republicans tout these baseless claims of voter fraud, there has not been a single instance where their claim has been justified. Why then change a system that works? Our state (and our nation) need to be making the process to vote easier, not harder. When I lived in Maryland ten years ago, a similar system to the one Sen. Smith is proposing was used. I don't need to expound on how literally standing in frigid, wet weather can have a negative effect on voter turnout. Oregon should not return to an antiquated system that disenfranchises its residents who want to have their voices heard simply to pacify Republican's trumped up suspicions and deliberately false accusations of fraud. We should not let unfounded fears prevent us from administering a fairer and more representative election.