

Submitter: Jacob Graber

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB210

Oregon's vote-by-mail system has been a cornerstone of our state's democracy for over two decades, enhancing accessibility, convenience, and voter participation. The proposed Senate Bill 210, which seeks to eliminate mail-in voting, threatens to dismantle a system that has proven effective and reliable.?

Research indicates that universal vote-by-mail systems significantly increase voter turnout. For instance, a 2022 study found that such systems boosted turnout among registered voters by 5.6 percentage points in the 2020 election. In Oregon, the introduction of vote-by-mail led to a remarkable 79% voter turnout in the 2000 presidential election, the first conducted entirely by mail. ?

Beyond increased participation, vote-by-mail offers unparalleled convenience, allowing voters to cast their ballots without the need to visit polling places, thereby reducing long lines and scheduling conflicts. It also provides voters with ample time to research candidates and measures, leading to more informed decisions. ?

Concerns about security and fraud in mail-in voting have been thoroughly investigated, with studies consistently showing that such instances are exceedingly rare. Oregon's system includes robust measures to ensure the integrity of each ballot, maintaining public confidence in our elections. ?

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Eliminating mail-in voting would not only reverse these benefits but also impose unnecessary barriers to participation, particularly affecting those with mobility challenges, tight work schedules, or other constraints. Preserving and enhancing our vote-by-mail system is essential to uphold the democratic values of accessibility and inclusivity that Oregonians hold dear.?