

Submitter:

Dylan Feral-McWhirter

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB210

I oppose making in-person voting the standard method for conducting elections in Oregon for the following reasons:

1. Mail in voting works. Data shows that it provides higher voter turn out and extremely low rates of voter fraud. The rates of voter fraud found are absurdly low (0.00007%).

<https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/lfo/Documents/2020%20Issue%20Review%20-%20Oregon%20Vote%20by%20Mail.pdf>

<https://www.heritage.org/election-integrity/commentary/database-swells-1285-proven-cases-voter-fraud-america>

That is largely due to the fact that voting by mail leaves a paper trail that can be followed and most "bad actors" aren't stupid enough to risk imprisonment for essentially no gain.

2. The proposed bill ultimately leaves it up to the Secretary of State to determine the minimum number of in-person voting booths (amendment to 254.474 1a). This sort of power has been used in other states to limit the number of voting booths in certain districts making for long lines limiting the number of people who can reasonably vote in those districts.

The current wording of 254.474 specifying the number of voting booths based on the number of people in the county isn't exactly fair either and is probably inadequate to handle the number of people if in-person voting was the standard. Under the current rules for each voting booth in Multnomah county would have to handle up to 27 voters per hour (in an eight-hour voting period), in Gilliam county the voting booth would only have to handle 1 person per hour. Because people may take longer than 2 minutes to vote and because people won't be showing up in uniform 2 minute intervals the current wording of 254.474 would also lead to long lines and/or restricting the number of voters who can vote in some counties if in-person voting was standard.

A logical method for determining the number of voting booths could be put into law that takes into account the number of people the booth would have to service, the median time it takes someone to vote, peak voting hours, and typical travel time to the voting booth. An algorithm could put into the law and data could be pulled by the Secretary of State and the correct number voting booths could be calculated.

The bottom line is that how long it takes to vote should be decided by the Secretary of State or where you happen to live. In a free and fair election, it should be equally easy for every registered voter to vote. That goal is largely accomplished with vote by mail.

3. The reasons given to move away from vote by mail are completely disingenuous. Successful voter fraud is almost impossible and extremely rare. The real reason to move to in-person voting is to make it more difficult for some legal voters to vote, suppressing voter turnout, and leaving a voting base that is more controllable and/or has more desirable demographics to certain groups/parties. This has been shown in other states and sometimes stated expressly by some people in politics. These sorts of unnecessary hurdles to voters are really their own version of voter fraud.