

To whom it may concern,

I am writing regarding SB210 to express my strong opposition to Oregon's vote-by-mail system, a method that, while praised for convenience, raises significant concerns about election integrity, particularly due to the absence of voter ID requirements, the potential for fraud, and other structural vulnerabilities. As a native Oregonian, I STRONGLY urge a critical reevaluation of this system to ensure that every vote cast reflects the true will of eligible Oregon voters.

One of the most glaring weaknesses in Oregon's vote-by-mail framework is the lack of a voter ID requirement. Unlike states that mandate identification to verify a voter's identity at the polls, Oregon relies solely on signature verification—a process that is inherently subjective and inconsistent. Signatures can change over time due to age, health, or simple variation, leaving room for human error or exploitation. ***Without a standardized, objective check like a photo ID***, it becomes nearly impossible to guarantee that the person submitting a ballot is the registered voter. This gap undermines public trust and opens the door to potential abuse, especially in a system where ballots are mailed en masse without proactive identity confirmation.

The potential for fraud in vote-by-mail is not a hypothetical concern—it is a documented risk. While Oregon officials often cite low fraud rates, the state's system lacks robust safeguards to prevent it entirely. Ballots are mailed to every registered voter, yet voter rolls are not immune to inaccuracies, such as outdated addresses or deceased individuals remaining listed. In a high-stakes election, a single fraudulent vote could tip the scales, and the absence of in-person verification amplifies this danger. Historical examples, like the 2018 North Carolina 9th Congressional District case involving absentee ballot tampering, illustrate how mail-based systems can be exploited through vote harvesting or coercion—practices harder to detect outside supervised polling places. Oregon's reliance on drop boxes, while convenient, further complicates chain-of-custody issues, as these sites are not always monitored with the rigor needed to deter interference.

Beyond ID and fraud concerns, the vote-by-mail system erodes the civic ritual of in-person voting, which fosters community accountability and transparency. Mailing ballots to all registered voters assumes universal compliance and honesty, yet it discounts the reality that not every household is a secure environment for voting. Spouses, roommates, or caregivers could exert undue influence—or even fill out ballots—without oversight, compromising the principle of a secret ballot. Additionally, the system's dependence on the U.S. Postal Service introduces logistical risks, such as delays or lost ballots, which disproportionately affect rural or low-income voters who may lack easy access to drop boxes.

Proponents argue that Oregon's fraud rate is negligible, often pointing to fewer than a dozen convictions over decades. However, this statistic reflects only detected and prosecuted cases—not the full scope of potential irregularities. The absence of voter ID and the decentralized nature of mail voting make it difficult to quantify undetected fraud,

leaving Oregonians to rely on an ill founded subjective faith in government rather than facts based evidence. Convenience should not supersede election security, and a system that prioritizes ease over accountability fails to uphold the integrity of our Constitutional Republic's electoral process.

I strongly call for Oregon lawmakers to reconsider its exclusive reliance on vote-by-mail and restoring it with same day in-person voting with mandatory voter ID checks only with exceptions in health related instances for example. In addition, same day election results are also necessary for instilling Oregonian's confidence in our electoral process. Elections are the bedrock of self-governance, and Oregon lawmakers must prioritize measures that protect every single legitimate vote while preventing even the slightest possibility of illegitimate ones.

Sincerely,
Cliff Etzel