

Submitter:

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On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB210

Back during the 1992 elections, I voted. I had to take time off from work, walk nearly a mile to my voting precinct, and submit my ballot in person. While my employer had planned ahead of time to have coverage for employees going to vote (we worked at a child development center), we did not get paid for that time off. There was no direct public transport, and for the employees that lived further away, they had to deal with longer times away from work, thus more economic hardship.

The last time I voted in person was for the 2000. I've never had any difficulty in the years since, in getting my ballot or it being received, or counted.

Oregon has hardened its mail-in voting by providing secure drop sites (not just mailboxes), providing online verification that my ballot has been sent and received. It's even gone so far as to check in with me recently because, over time, my signature has changed just enough for them to want an updated one for future elections.

These are more proactive steps taken to protect voter integrity than any other state or federal agency I've interacted with.

Oregon has a good record of handling problems with voter mistakes and/or fraud. The follow-up and understanding of how these mistakes/fraudulent actions were taken is thorough.

Many people would be stripped of their vote over transportation requirements, should in-person voting be the standard. Older folks who have worked hard to make our state and country a good place to live. Those living in poverty, very rurally, or without a car would have their ability to vote taken away just for not having transportation. Those with disabilities who perhaps experience complications with either their physical or mental health in having to go to a crowded location, stay in a line for hours with other people, and the tensions that arise in such an atmosphere; making voting a horrendous sensory experience for many Oregonians.

Part of equality is ensuring equitable access to ALL eligible voters, that they are allowed their Constitutional right to cast a ballot. In states which discourage voting by mail, we also have seen spotty, inconsistent polling stations and precincts, favorable conditions being granted to districts who favor one party over another, or parts of town primarily habituated by minorities receiving very little help in voting. Even so far as to ban people passing out simple things like water for people waiting in line on a hot day.

Have our state's legislators become so inhumane that they would willingly believe a lie, perpetuated by one party, of habitual voter fraud via the Vote By Mail program. Dare I ask, how many of each legislators constituents would be stripped of their opportunity to vote simply because of a baseless rumor? Are you willing to tell that older farmer who can't drive now that he doesn't get a vote? What about the mother taking care of children with disabilities? Does she not get to vote because she can't find childcare for such a long stretch, and loading up a disabled child(ren) and their strollers/wheelchairs, to go stand in a line so she, who is doing hard work, can vote?

These are real-life implications for people. We are not hypotheticals. The act of mail-in voting is what democratizes us: instead of only those with the required resources of time, transportation, and money being 'allowed' to vote (because by creating hurdles, which disallow voting, this causes discrimination that any disability rights group *\*should\** sue over), our method of mail-in voting ensures that everyone who can legally vote is able to.

Long gone is the time when we required literacy rules and other discriminatory practices. We must continue to do better for the future, which is why I strongly oppose this bill. Only mail-in voting will ensure democracy at the ballot box. Thank you.