



**Marion County Democratic Central Committee**  
245 High St NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Bonham, and Members of the Committee,

I'm Paige Barton, Chair of the Marion County Democrats. I'm writing to oppose SB 210 on behalf of the Marion County Democratic Party's Legislative Committee. Please vote no on SB 210.

Voting by mail is convenient. Whether Marion County voters live in Salem, Stayton, Sublimity, or St. Paul, they can vote in their own home, take their time, and fit voting into their busy schedules. It reduces barriers for rural voters, those who may lack transportation, and the possibility of inclement weather posing an obstacle. Voting by mail only increases voter participation.

Marion County has one of the best clerks in our state, Bill Burgess. I have toured the Marion County Clerk's office to observe how ballots are processed. Anyone can make an appointment like this. Our state statutes require that county elections officials have a security plan and test their vote tally system before each election. These are public.

Voting by mail is cost effective. The 2018 general election cost the counties approximately \$4.5 million. Adjusted for inflation, the 1998 general election would have cost approximately \$5.5 million in 2018 dollars. This means the 2018 general election would have cost about \$1 million less, a savings of 18% to Oregon counties. Many Oregon counties are facing budget deficits, and in-person voting will increase costs across the state.

Many are concerned about voter "fraud." Between the years 2000 and 2019, Oregonians cast almost 61 million ballots in statewide and special elections. The Oregon Department of Justice Criminal Justice Division obtained 38 criminal convictions relating to voter fraud during that period. That amounts to a rate of 0.0006%.

I heard many proponents indicate that people could simply miss work to vote in person. That is not the reality for many working families in Marion County. The likelihood that employers would provide paid time off to vote is low. To provide access to participation, a "yes" vote on SB 210 imposes an additional expense on small businesses and other employers, at a time when other costs are already high.

We strongly urge you to oppose this bill. While I did attend the March 31 Senate Committee on Rules meeting virtually, I regret that I was skipped and was not able to testify live today. Thank you for reading our perspective on this bill.

Paige Barton  
Chair  
Marion County Democratic Party