



To: Senate Committee on Rules
From: Oregon Education Association
Re: Oppose SB 210

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

For the record, my name is Enrique Farrera, the Statewide Vice President of the Oregon Education Association, and I am testifying today to express my strong opposition to Senate Bill 210 which seeks to make in-person voting on Election Day the standard method for conducting elections in Oregon. At the same time, this bill will limit vote-by-mail options and impose severe identification requirements. I believe this bill undermines the accessibility and inclusivity that have been the hallmarks of Oregon's electoral system for decades.

Oregon has been a pioneer in implementing a universal vote-by-mail system, which has significantly increased voter participation, streamlined the electoral process, and made Oregon a national leader when it comes to voting accessibility.

When I think about mandating in-person voting as the default method, I think about all the hard-working Oregonians who will be disproportionately impacted. Take my members for example – educators from pre-k to higher education – educators who teach at all hours of the day, would find it more difficult to vote. This would also negatively impact Oregonians with disabilities, people of color, elderly folks and folks who live in rural Oregon.

The bill's requirement for voters to present valid government-issued identification when voting in person or requesting a mail-in ballot introduces unnecessary barriers. Studies have shown that such requirements can disenfranchise eligible voters, particularly among marginalized communities who may lack the specified forms of ID.

Another way that this bill would make voting less accessible is that it would remove the provision for state-paid postage on mail-in ballots. The whole point for paying for postage was to make voting more accessible for low-income Oregonians. Removing this provision places an additional burden on voters that could deter participation.

Senate Bill 210 represents a significant step backward for voting accessibility in Oregon. By dismantling the proven vote-by-mail system and imposing restrictive measures, this legislation threatens to disenfranchise countless voters and erode the inclusive democracy that Oregonians have long championed. I urge you to oppose SB 210 and to continue supporting policies that make voting as accessible and equitable as possible for all citizens.

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