

Submitter:

Mary Wilkins

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB210

Dear Members of the Oregon State Legislature,

I am writing to express my unequivocal opposition to Senate Bill 210, which seeks to dismantle Oregon's long-standing vote-by-mail system in favor of mandatory in-person voting on Election Day.

It is imperative to recognize that SB 210 does not serve the interests of Oregonians. Instead, it is a flagrant attempt at voter suppression, a shameless and brazen attack on the democratic values and freedoms upon which our country was conceived.

Voting is the cornerstone of our civic duty—our shared responsibility to shape the future of our communities and our country. In a participatory democracy like ours, you must do your civic duty so that the power resides in the hands of the people, not just the rich and powerful.

This proposed shift to exclusive in-person voting, coupled with stringent identification requirements is anti-democratic, threatening to disenfranchise countless Oregonians. Many citizens, including the elderly, disabled, and those with demanding work schedules, rely on the convenience and flexibility of our very secure vote-by-mail provides. Forcing these individuals to vote in person creates unnecessary barriers and undermines the inclusivity upon which our electoral system depends. Such actions are antithetical to our democratic values and the founding principles of our republic.

For those of us who believe in facts and data-driven decisions, the security and integrity of Oregon's vote-by-mail system are well-documented. Each ballot is meticulously tracked, and the system leaves a verifiable paper trail, ensuring transparency and trust in our elections. Moving away from this proven method not only disregards empirical evidence but also sows unwarranted doubt in the electoral process—and in American democracy itself.

I urge you to reject Senate Bill 210 and uphold the integrity of Oregon's electoral system for the sake of our American Experiment, the revolutionary and world-changing assertion that a nation could be founded on principles of democracy, liberty, and self-governance—an unprecedented vision at the time of the country's founding. It captures the bold belief that a diverse people could govern themselves through reason, law, and mutual consent, challenging centuries of monarchies and authoritarian rule.

Let Oregon continue to lead by example, demonstrating that democracy must be accessible, secure, and inclusive if it is to survive. As Benjamin Franklin warned, we have "a republic, if you can keep it." Preserving that republic requires rejecting efforts like SB 210 that would suppress the vote and weaken the very foundations of our democracy.