

Chair Bowman, Vice-Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Drazen, and Members of the House Committee on Rules:

I am truly heartened to see so many Oregonians have submitted testimony opposing SB 210. This is truly a terrible bill and I hope you will not give it any further attention after today's hearing.

I registered to vote when I turned 18, way back in 1977. I wish I could tell you that I faithfully voted in every election since then, but that's just not the case. A full time job, a growing family, snow and rain, and exhaustion kept me from voting in many elections. There was even a polling place at the school where I worked, but it wasn't "my" polling place so I couldn't vote there. Voting in person was never just a hardship for people with disabilities, whom proponents of this bill would allow to continue voting by mail, it was a hardship for EVERYONE who had to work on election day, take care of children, didn't have transportation, and a whole host of other reasons.

Since Oregon adopted Vote-by-Mail, I have voted in every election. I have taken the time to research all the candidates carefully, even the judges! Voting by mail has made me pay attention to candidates and issues on ballot measures. It has made me a more civic-minded citizen. I'm sure I'm not alone in this experience.

Do people sometime cheat with Vote-by-Mail? Of course, and there are mechanisms in place to catch and penalize them. The actual evidence about cheating is that the cases are so rare as to not affect the outcome of elections, especially since cheaters come from all political parties or no party. The notion of widespread voter fraud in Oregon is so easily disproven that anyone who claims it's a serious issue must be incapable of discerning fact from fiction.

The whole premise of this bill is built on the lie that Vote-by-Mail is not secure. I trust that this committee knows that and will not waste any more taxpayer dollars (your work time) on this blatant effort to suppress voters who are young parents, working people, and people for whom transportation to a polling place would be a hardship.

Thank you,

Debi Ferrer
The Dalles