

To The Oregon State Senate Committee on Rules

Many Oregonians believe that our state's all-mail voting system is not secure, a concern that Senate Bill 210 addresses by shifting to in-person voting on Election Day with photo ID requirements. This unease stems from several vulnerabilities: the lack of real-time oversight in mail-in voting opens the door to ballot harvesting or coercion, where ballots could be collected and submitted by third parties without voter consent. Furthermore, errors at the Oregon DMV have led to non-citizens being mistakenly registered to voter rolls due to clerical mistakes. Such incidents highlight how procedural weaknesses can compromise election integrity, fueling public doubt about the system's reliability.

Even the appearance of impropriety in our voting process is unacceptable, as it chips away at the trust essential to democracy. Elections must be unimpeachable, both in practice and perception. When voters learn of non-citizens inadvertently registered by the DMV or question how mailed ballots are tracked from mailbox to tally, confidence wavers. SB 210 tackles this by requiring in-person voting and photo ID, measures that visibly strengthen security and project fairness. The issue isn't just about potential fraud—though examples exist—but about eliminating any hint of doubt. A voting system that invites skepticism, even if unjustified, fails its citizens by weakening their belief in the process that amplifies their voice.

Restoring public faith in Oregon's elections is critical to safeguarding our democracy. Without it, we risk voter disengagement or rejection of results, threatening the stability of our governance. Beyond the DMV's registration errors, periodic reports of lost or uncounted ballots—like those misplaced in rural counties during the 2020 election cycle—deepen mistrust. SB 210's move to in-person voting with verifiable ID offers a transparent, trustworthy process that Oregonians can witness and rely upon. If we allow uncertainty to persist, we jeopardize a democracy where citizens either tune out or contest outcomes, fracturing our system. This bill is more than reform—it's a vital step to ensure Oregonians trust their elections again.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Welch

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