

Submitter: Tim Navarrette
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB210
Chair and Members of the Committee,

I strongly urge you to reject Senate Bill 210, as it presents a direct and unacceptable barrier to voting for countless Oregonians, particularly those with disabilities, mobility challenges, and other circumstances that prevent them from physically attending a polling place on Election Day. Oregon's vote-by-mail system has long been a model of accessibility, ensuring that every eligible voter—regardless of physical ability, health condition, work obligations, or caregiving responsibilities—has an equal opportunity to participate in our democracy. By restricting mail-in voting and requiring in-person participation for most voters, this bill effectively disenfranchises those who cannot easily leave their homes, travel long distances, or navigate the logistical challenges of a single-day, in-person election. The right to vote should never be conditional on one's physical ability to stand in line at a polling station.

Furthermore, Senate Bill 210 directly undermines the fundamental democratic principles enshrined in our state and national constitutions. Voting is not a privilege granted at the discretion of policymakers—it is a constitutional right, one that should be protected and expanded, not restricted. The right to vote should not be contingent upon an individual's ability to overcome arbitrary hurdles that disproportionately impact vulnerable communities. This bill seeks to roll back a system that has worked for decades, prioritizing exclusion over accessibility, and in doing so, it actively suppresses the voices of Oregonians who rely on vote-by-mail to exercise their rights.

Democracy thrives when participation is encouraged, not obstructed. Oregon has long led the nation in ensuring secure, accessible, and transparent elections, with vote-by-mail serving as a cornerstone of that success. The proposed restrictions in SB 210 are not only unnecessary but also harmful, creating inequitable barriers that will disproportionately affect seniors, disabled voters, rural communities, and working families. Denying Oregonians their fundamental right to vote based on their ability to appear in person is a betrayal of the democratic ideals this state has upheld for over two decades. I strongly urge you to uphold the values of democracy and reject this bill in its entirety.