

Submitter: Tanya Kindrachuk
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB210

Testimony Opposing Bill SB 210 to Repeal Vote-by-Mail in Oregon

Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Tanya and I am writing in strong opposition to the bill proposing the repeal of vote-by-mail in Oregon.

Ever since I became a young adult and cast my first ballot, I have felt incredibly fortunate to live in a state that prioritizes the right to vote for all Oregonians. Vote-by-mail has allowed me, and countless others, to participate in our democracy fully and meaningfully without having to sacrifice time, money, or personal obligations.

Many Oregonians, like myself, juggle work and family responsibilities. The vote-by-mail system respects the reality of our lives. It ensures we don't have to choose between a paycheck and our voice. It protects the rights of those who cannot easily access polling stations including those without reliable transportation, those with essential jobs, those who are caregivers, those with disabilities, and those for whom standing in long lines is simply not possible. Not to mention the many reports of intimidation of polling sites may also lead to certain populations choosing safety over a vote.

I spend hours researching my ballot. I read the arguments in support and in opposition of each measure and research candidates and policies online. I often reflect on how difficult (if not impossible) it would be to do this in a tiny voting booth under time pressure. Vote-by-mail gives me the space and time to be an informed voter.

When I see news coverage from other states of people standing in lines for hours or encountering technical issues at polling stations am reminded how grateful I am that Oregon has led the nation in making voting accessible, fair, and secure.

We should be removing barriers to voting, not adding to them. Especially now when our communities are facing so many complex challenges it is more important than ever that every voice is heard.

Please do not take this step backward in our democratic process. Protect the vote-by-mail system that has served Oregonians so well.

Thank you. And I trust you will make the best decision that supports all Oregonians.