

Submitter:

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On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB210

I very much oppose the proposal to eliminate mail-in voting in Oregon. The ability to study the ballot over time at home allows me to cast my votes in a thoughtful and responsible way.

Three years ago I moved from Virginia to Portland, and at election time here I was astonished at the quantity of positions, candidates, and measures that appeared on my ballot. It was overwhelming and it took many hours of study to try to understand the issues and evaluate the candidates. In Portland, I needed to understand complex issues on my ballot that were even more confusing due to overlapping jurisdictions. For many important local positions there were large numbers of candidates, sometimes twenty or more, in the running. Ballot measures have been numerous, requiring hours of research and careful weighing of benefits and drawbacks.

In Virginia we had to vote in-person on election day, unless we had filed an application for an absentee ballot and attested that we would be outside the county on election day. This was changed a bit during the early covid years, when an alternative was offered, namely, in-person voting ahead of election day. I chose to do that, since it allowed me to skip the problems on election day.

Voting on election day in Virginia involved difficult parking, long lines on foot, and also having to pass by people advocating for candidates and parties who were stationed along the sidewalk in front of the polling place. These people tried to engage every voter to push on him a sample partisan ballot or engage in persuasion. I resented this, having decided ahead of time for whom I intended to vote.

I have found the mail-in method of voting in Oregon to be a vast improvement over the in-person election day voting method I experienced in Virginia. It is a model for the nation, and Oregon should not abandon it!