



Chair Jama, Vice Chair Bonham, and Members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Elsie Elling, and I am a Political and Policy Analyst at SEIU 503. I am here testifying in strong opposition to Senate Bill 210, which seeks to make in-person voting on Election Day the standard method for conducting elections in Oregon while limiting vote-by-mail options and imposing stringent identification requirements. I believe this bill undermines the accessibility and inclusivity that have been the hallmarks of Oregon's electoral system for decades.

Many of our members live in rural communities and work with disabled and older Oregonians who rely on our accessible vote by mail system to participate in our democratic process. We have members younger than 47 who grew up in Oregon and have never voted in person because our vote by mail system has been around for their entire voting history. And we have older members who remember what it was like to wait in long lines at the polls and have come to support and rely heavily on our vote by mail process for accessing the democratic process.

Mandating in-person voting as the default method disproportionately affects individuals with disabilities, elderly voters, those with demanding work schedules, and residents in rural areas who may face challenges reaching polling stations. The current vote-by-mail system accommodates these voters effectively, ensuring that all Oregonians have an equal opportunity to participate in the democratic process.

Our members work with some of the most vulnerable populations in Oregon who rely on vote-by-mail to be able to participate in the democratic process. They live in rural communities where accessing a voting poll would be an undue burden for them. They work irregular hours and have families that rely on them. Standing in long lines for hours to vote doesn't make sense for Oregonians and certainly would disrupt our democratic process. Our state has been successfully running vote-by-mail for almost 30 years, now is not the time to roll back our state's voting practices.

I encourage the members of this committee to oppose SB 210 and continue to prioritize election practices that are proven to significantly increase voter participation and streamline the electoral process, like our vote-by-mail system. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Elsie Elling

Political & Policy Analyst

SEIU 503, OPEU