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

Oregon has long been a national leader in election accessibility and security, thanks to our vote-by-mail system. As discussions arise about the future of this method, it is crucial to reaffirm its benefits and advocate for its continued use. Eliminating or restricting vote-by-mail would be a step backward in ensuring accessible, secure, and efficient elections for all Oregonians.

Vote-by-mail enhances voter participation. By allowing citizens to complete their ballots at their convenience, vote-by-mail eliminates many barriers associated with in-person voting, such as long lines, work conflicts, and transportation challenges. Oregon has consistently ranked among the states with the highest voter turnout, demonstrating the system's effectiveness in encouraging civic engagement.

Additionally, vote-by-mail is secure and reliable. Ballots are verified through signature matching, reducing the risk of fraud. In fact, Oregon has had no significant instances of voter fraud since implementing vote-by-mail statewide in 2000. The process includes multiple layers of security, from barcoded tracking to ballot drop boxes, ensuring the integrity of our elections.

Cost efficiency is another key advantage. Vote-by-mail reduces the need for extensive polling station infrastructure, staffing, and equipment. This streamlined approach saves taxpayer dollars while maintaining a high standard of electoral integrity.

Moreover, vote-by-mail accommodates all voters, including seniors, individuals with disabilities, and those living in rural areas who might otherwise face difficulties in reaching polling locations. Ensuring every eligible citizen can cast their vote without undue hardship is fundamental to a fair and representative democracy.

Oregon's vote-by-mail system is a model for the nation, proving that elections can be both accessible and secure. Any efforts to undermine or restrict this process would be a disservice to voters. I urge policymakers and residents to support and protect vote-by-mail as an essential pillar of our democracy.

Sincerely,
Liz Dooley

