



Portland City Auditor

Elections



April 1, 2025

Senate Committee on Rules
900 Court St NE, HR C
Salem, OR 97301

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

Senate Bill 210 proposes drastic and harmful changes to Oregon's voting system that threaten to roll back decades of progress in voter accessibility and participation. The City of Portland and the Portland Elections Division strongly oppose Senate Bill 210.

The Portland Elections Division, housed within the City of Portland's Auditor's Office, is dedicated to ensuring fair, transparent, and accessible elections in accordance with state and local law. We work closely with Multnomah County Elections to provide comprehensive, easy-to-understand voter materials that empower every Portlander with the knowledge they need to participate in elections, from how to fill out a ballot, to reporting official results. We take pride that municipal elections are grounded in Oregon's secure, user-friendly voting systems, which not only uphold the integrity of our elections but also encourage robust voter participation across Portland's diverse communities.

This proposal rests on claims about voter fraud which have been found, repeatedly and by multiple secretaries of state, Republican and Democrat, to be completely false.

Oregon has long been a national leader in secure, convenient, and transparent elections through our vote-by-mail system, which removes barriers to voting. Our system allows voters to receive, complete, and return ballots on their schedule and confirm their ballot was counted through an opt-in tracking system. This process adds transparency at every step, including the ability for anyone to observe ballots being securely verified and counted at the County Elections building.

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Shifting to an in-person voting model would impose significant obstacles for many Oregonians, particularly working families, seniors, individuals with disabilities, and those with transportation challenges. The requirement to physically go to polling places risks disenfranchising communities that have long benefited from our inclusive and proven system. Beyond accessibility concerns, this change would also place a heavy financial burden on the back of taxpayers. Running in-person elections requires staffing, security, poll workers, e-poll books, and additional in-person voting machines—all costly and logistically complex. Oregon's vote-by-mail system is not only cost-effective but has consistently resulted in high voter participation across the country. Moving away from this model would strain local resources and taxpayers without providing any clear benefits.

Oregon's vote-by-mail system has made participation easy and reliable. SB 210 would create unnecessary and costly barriers, making it harder for the average Portlander to vote and lead to lower turnout and less representative elections. For these reasons, we strongly urge a no vote on SB 210.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Deborah Scroggin".

Deborah Scroggin
Elections Division Manager