

## SB 210 Return to Polling Place Voting in Oregon-Oppose

Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Bonham and members of the committee.

Vote by mail has proven itself.

In a 2020 paper by Oregon's Legislative Fiscal office a comparison was made on cost.

The May 1998 primary cost \$3.4 million, whereas the May 2000 primary cost \$2.8 million. This resulted in a savings of nearly \$600,000 (17%) to the counties.

There are similar savings when comparing the costs of the 1998 general election with the 2018 general election, i.e., comparing the costs of the last polling place general election with the costs of the most recent general election conducted by mail. The 1998 general election cost Oregon counties almost \$3.6 million, whereas the 2018 general election cost the counties approximately \$4.5 million. Adjusted for inflation using the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, the 1998 general election would have cost approximately \$5.5 million in November 2018. In other words, the 2018 general election would have cost about \$1 million less, a savings of 18%.<sup>1</sup>

Many are concerned about voter "fraud". We believe it is very rare, and figures provide proof.

"Between the years 2000 and 2019, Oregonians cast approximately 60.9 million ballots in statewide and special elections. The Oregon Department of Justice estimates that the Criminal Justice Division (and the Civil Enforcement Division) obtained 38 criminal convictions relating to voter fraud during that period. The most prevalent forms of voter fraud, according to the Division, are duplicate voting (e.g., a person who votes in more than one state in the same election) and ballot forgery (e.g., a member of a household who fills out the ballots of other household members and fraudulently signs their names). In other words, the Division obtained 38 criminal convictions for voter fraud out of the 60.9 million ballots in Oregon elections cast over a 19-year period. That amounts to a rate of .00006%. These figures demonstrate that voter fraud is exceedingly rare in Oregon and is no more widespread in vote by mail elections than it is in polling place elections. <sup>2</sup> **In June 2020, the Heritage Foundation reviewed all voter fraud cases it could find over a 36-year period. Heritage found 1,285 cases of voter fraud out of more than 1.8 billion ballots cast in all 50 states from 1982 to 2018. That amounts to a rate of 0.00007%.**<sup>3</sup> **(Note: The Heritage Foundation has updated their figures through 2024, but I did not have time to do the calculations. We do not believe it has changed significantly.)**

For these reasons I strongly urge you to oppose this bill.

Vote by Mail is cost effective, and it is safe.

Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony.

1. Oregon Legislative Fiscal Office, Oregon Vote by Mail, October 2020.
2. Ibid
3. Ibid