

25 January 2023

TO: Sen Prozanski, Co-Chair Thatcher & Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary  
Oregon State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97301

FROM: Laurie Kimmell  
Sisters, OR 97759

SUBJECT: Argument Against SB 579

ATTENTION: FOR ALL REVIEWING AUTHORITIES

Please accept this as my testimony against SB 579. I have honorably served in the Uniformed Services for 24 years and in Law Enforcement for 27 years. SB 579 would allow convicted felons to register to vote, update voter registration and vote in elections. These are the facts: according to John Sughrue the law librarian at Southern State Correctional Facility in Vermont\*, only a tiny percentage of those incarcerated in that prison end up voting. The larger issue is the high illiteracy rate among those incarcerated. Mr. Sughrue realized that many of the prison population can't read, and those who can read struggle to fill out a ballot without help? Prison officials in Vermont and Maine rely on groups to do voting drives. Which groups are going to be let in the prisons? Are these groups going to help fill out ballots? This opens the door to voter fraud and undue influence. I witnessed the illiteracy rate, the struggle to fill out simple forms, the need for help during my tenure in the law enforcement field, and the lack of interest by the population to vote. This is just another attempt to bolster the voter rolls and plump up census numbers for 2030 consequently; I cannot support the bill.

Thank you,

  
LAURIE KIMMELL, MSgt, USAF (Ret.)

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<sup>i</sup>\*Both Maine and Vermont do not count the incarcerated inmate voter in the town the prison is located as. Also, in Vermont relies on a legal decision dating back to a1799 for voting.