

RE: Support Guaranteeing the Right to Vote, SB 579  
Senate Committee on Judiciary

**1/25/23**

Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

My name is **Charlie DuCharme** and I live in **Portland, Oregon**. I am writing to testify in strong support for Guaranteeing the Right to Vote, SB 579, which will ensure every eligible Oregonian can register to vote, update their voter registration, and vote in elections based on where they resided prior to incarceration.

The right to vote is enshrined in our constitution and fundamental to a vibrant and participatory democracy. Yet, around 12,000 people in Oregon are currently denied their right to vote, leading to the disproportionate disenfranchisement of low-income, Black, Indigenous, and Latine people. Guaranteeing the Right to Vote fulfills the promise of our democracy while improving public safety, and addressing racial and socioeconomic inequities.

**As a trans, Asian-American, I deeply believe that voting is a fundamental right. It allows community members, like myself, to vote for legislation that protects trans rights, racial justice and more. I believe the right to vote is a basic human right and all Oregonians should have the ability to participate. By taking away the right to vote from those incarcerated limits the voices of those most marginalized in our society and system.**

As an Oregonian, I know that connection to community through civic engagement while incarcerated leads to healthier communities, that voting is a civic right and responsibility, and that we can address unjust impacts of mass incarceration.

I am not alone in my support for this important bill. This legislation is supported by over 40 civil rights organizations, faith-based groups, as well as dozens of currently and formerly incarcerated people. Please ensure that Guaranteeing the Right to Vote, SB 579, is passed out of committee.

Thank you,

**Charlie DuCharme**