

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

January 25, 2023

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

My name is Julia Yoshimoto and I live in Tigard, 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.

For nearly ten years, I have worked closely with many people incarcerated in Oregon. From my experiences, I know that connection to community through civic engagement connects incarcerated people to the communities that they will join after prison. This leads to healthier communities where people have greater opportunity to thrive.

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,

Julia Yoshimoto