

Submitter: Kelly Tedeschi-Bowman  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary  
Measure: SB579

RE: Support Guaranteeing the Right to Vote, SB 579

Senate Committee on Judiciary

January 26, 2023

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

My name is Kelly Tedeschi-Bowman and I live in Corvallis. 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 law student working towards justice for those that are wrongfully convicted, I know the importance of having the right to vote to be able to make change. In the interest of justice and equity, it is imperative that all Oregonians, even those that are incarcerated, perhaps ESPECIALLY those that are incarcerated, need the right to vote.

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,

Kelly Tedeschi-Bowman