

Submitter: Linda Nettekoven
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary
Measure: SB579

RE: Support Guaranteeing the Right to Vote, SB 579
Senate Committee on Judiciary
January 27, 2023

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

My name is Linda Nettekoven and I live in Portland. I am writing to testify in strong support of 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. Let's keep Oregon in the vanguard when it comes to policies that expand voter access including restoring the right to vote for those who are incarcerated.

Our existing laws deny the right to vote to approximately 12,000 people in Oregon, causing a disproportionate disenfranchisement of low-income Black, Indigenous and Latino Oregonians. Prison disenfranchisement doesn't make our communities safer. Instead it serves to further hinder many already marginalized individuals from maintaining or strengthening the community ties they will need upon reentering society.

Guaranteeing their Right to Vote fulfills the promise of our democracy while providing one more way to continue to address the racial and socioeconomic inequities that are endemic in our society.

In supporting this important bill I am joining with over 40 civil rights organizations and 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,
Linda Nettekoven