

Submitter: Todd Mintz
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB210

Oregon has been at the forefront of implementing vote-by-mail, a system that has proven to be safe, fair, efficient, and cost-effective for over two decades. Since its adoption, vote-by-mail has become integral to Oregon's electoral process, contributing to increased voter participation and streamlined election administration. ?

Safety and Security

The integrity of Oregon's vote-by-mail system is upheld through rigorous verification processes. Each mail-in ballot undergoes meticulous signature verification to confirm voter identity, ensuring that only legitimate votes are counted. This method has demonstrated resilience against fraud, with studies indicating a minimal incidence of voting irregularities. ?

Fairness and Accessibility

Vote-by-mail enhances accessibility, particularly benefiting elderly voters and individuals with disabilities who might face challenges reaching traditional polling stations. By receiving ballots at home, these voters can participate in elections without physical barriers, promoting inclusivity in the democratic process. ?

Efficiency and Cost-Effectiveness

Transitioning to vote-by-mail has led to significant cost savings for Oregon. The reduction in expenses related to staffing polling stations and managing in-person voting logistics has decreased election costs by approximately 30% to 50%. For instance, Colorado experienced a 40% cost reduction after implementing a similar system. ?

Voter Participation

Oregon's vote-by-mail system has positively impacted voter turnout. By providing voters with the convenience of casting their ballots from home, participation rates have seen an uptick. This approach eliminates common barriers associated with in-person voting, such as long lines and limited polling hours. ?

Conclusion

Reverting to a traditional in-person voting system would not only reintroduce logistical complexities and increased costs but also potentially disenfranchise segments of the population who benefit from the accessibility of vote-by-mail. Maintaining the current system aligns with principles of fiscal responsibility and democratic inclusivity.

Advocating for the abolition of vote-by-mail overlooks its proven advantages and disregards the needs of many Oregonians who rely on this method to exercise their right to vote.