

Submitter: Danae Mahecic
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB210

Dear Chair and Members of the Oregon Senate Committee on Rules:

My name is Danae, and I have been a proud resident of Oregon for my entire life. I am writing to you today with deep concern about any proposal that seeks to end our state's longstanding and pioneering mail-in voting system. I firmly believe that changing our mail-in system would not only be a step backwards for our democracy, but it would also endanger the basic voting rights of thousands of Oregon residents—myself included.

As a single, working mother of two children, I have relied on our mail-in voting process more times than I can count. Between juggling my full-time job, being the primary financial provider for my family, and caring for my children, there were many election days when I simply could not get time off. Our vote-by-mail system offered me the flexibility to participate in our democracy without having to worry about missing work or paying for childcare just to stand in a long line at a polling station.

Furthermore, I speak not only for myself but also for the countless other Oregonians facing barriers to in-person voting. Approximately one in four adults in Oregon—25%—live with some form of chronic illness or chronic pain. This may be arthritis, fibromyalgia, diabetes, or any of the myriad conditions that make daily life a challenge. On top of that, more than 18% of Oregonians are aged 65 or older, and over 20% of adults in Oregon live with disabilities that hamper mobility. These figures are not just statistics on a piece of paper; these are our neighbors, parents, grandparents, veterans, and friends.

For these individuals—who often find it difficult to leave their homes due to mobility constraints, pain, or health complications—vote-by-mail is not a convenience, it is an absolute necessity. Ending our mail-in voting system would disproportionately affect these vulnerable groups, effectively stripping them of their cherished right to vote or creating new obstacles that could make voting nearly impossible.

In Oregon, we pride ourselves on fostering a spirit of inclusivity and progressive thinking. Our vote-by-mail system is a tangible reflection of that spirit. It is both secure and accessible, and it encourages greater civic participation. Evidence shows that mail-in voting boosts voter turnout and ensures that people from all walks of life—especially those with limited time, mobility concerns, and health needs—can make their voices heard.

To repeal or undermine vote-by-mail would be to turn our backs on decades of progress in the state we love. We should be ashamed to even consider returning to an era in which only those with flexible schedules or strong physical health can engage in the democratic process. Oregon has always stood as a beacon of forward-thinking policy, championing the welfare of its citizens. This proposed change would be a glaring retreat from those values. It disregards the needs of the many Oregonians who literally depend on mail-in voting to exercise a constitutional right that should be accessible to all.

I am imploring you, as members of the Senate Committee on Rules, to uphold the integrity and inclusivity of our electoral process. I ask that you do everything in your power to ensure that vote-by-mail remains a cornerstone of Oregon's proud and democratic tradition. Thank you for considering my testimony, and thank you for making our state a better place to live, work, and raise a family.

With sincerity and hope in the future of our great state,
Danae Mahecic