

Chair Burdick; Senators Frederick, Beyer, Prozanski, Manning; and Distinguished Members of Oregon's State Senate Rules Committee -

Thank you for your support and consideration of expanding electoral access by allowing for prepaid postage of Oregon's vote-by-mail ballots (SB 861).

Though passing SB 861 would be a welcome step in the right direction, **I am deeply concerned that thousands of Oregon voters who mail their ballot on/just before Election Day are not fully counted/tabulated in our state's and county's final results.** Moreover, if an Oregon voter continues to improperly mail their ballot on Election Day year after year, there is no official process by which the Secretary of State or County Clerks inform the voter to correct their habit of mailing their ballot "late."

Voter registration, State/Federal taxes, and every utility bill imaginable accept postage postmarked on the due date, *but not Oregon ballots?* **Please correct this oversight and amend language in SB 861 to allow for ballots mailed or postmarked on Election Day to be fully counted.**

As you know, submitting one's ballot at any designated drop box location in the state will ensure one's ballot will be fully counted -- regardless of which county drop box one submits their ballot. Therefore, there is already a state-sanctioned process for receiving/tabulating ballots *after* Election Day. However, postmarked ballots on/before Election Day must be physically received by County Elections at 8pm on Election Day, a challenge both to U.S. Postal Service; and, as demonstrated by the letter below, an issue that continues to disenfranchise voters and cause confusion among the electorate.

Below is a relevant letter sent to me by fellow Oregon voter Barbara Warren-Sams. In addition to my advocacy for allowing for postmarked on Election Day ballots to be fully counted, please allow me to submit Ms. Warren-Sams's correspondence for the record:

January 29, 2018

Matt Keating
Democratic National Committee
Democratic Party of Oregon
232 NE 9th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97232

Dear Mr. Keating:

Thank you for stopping by my home to remind me to vote on Measure 101. If you hadn't stopped by, I would have mailed my ballot on Saturday, which you informed me would have been too late. Both my daughter and I thought (assumed) our ballots would have been counted as long as the were postmarked January 23.

I mentioned the situation to my neighbor who also had the wrong information until she heard an announcement at services on Saturday about the need to hand-deliver one's ballot at an officially designated place.

I suggest that all future advertising, including lawn signs (the one one I saw said, "Vote by January 23),

display the correct dates for mailing versus hand-delivering ballots.

Sincerely,

Barbara Warren-Sams
Registered Oregon Voter

Senators, as you approach various amendments considering the most critical topic of equal access to the ballot box through paid-postage reform, **please encourage your colleagues to include amendment language that clearly outlines and allows for ballots postmarked on Election Day to be fully counted.**

With deep gratitude for your time, service, and consideration, thank you.

Sincerely,

Matthew K. Keating
Eugene, OR

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Matt Keating
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