



PRESS RELEASE

OREGON HOUSE DEMOCRATS

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House Democrats Expand Voting Rights for Oregonians

House Bill 3291 allows ballots that are postmarked by Election Day to be counted if received within seven days by the county clerk.

SALEM, OR—Today House Democrats passed [House Bill 3291](#), expanding voting accessibility by allowing ballots that are postmarked by Election Day to be counted if received within seven days after Election Day. Currently, ballots that are in USPS' hands by Election Day but were not delivered until after Election Day are not counted, discarding thousands of votes. This impacts several vulnerable populations, including rural areas, low-income folks, and Black, Indigenous and communities of color who face increased barriers to voting. The bill aims to expand voting rights by ensuring every ballot submitted by Election Day is counted and every voice is heard.

“When someone takes the time out of their busy life to vote and mails in their ballot before Election Day, their vote should count,” said [Rep. Dan Rayfield](#) (D-Corvallis), the bill's chief sponsor. “Our democracy is most reflective of the people it serves when every voice is heard.”

In 2001 (HB 3742) and 2007 (HB 3434), Republican legislators in the House introduced similar legislation that would have ensured ballots postmarked by Election Day were to be counted. Today Democrats carry this legislation over as voting rights are threatened and restricted by Republican state legislatures across the country, targeting communities of color who turned out in historic numbers this past year.

“Voting is a right, not a privilege. At a time when we see attacks on voting rights across the country, Oregon has a chance to lead on expanding voting access,” said co-sponsor [Rep. Khanh Pham](#) (D-Portland). “We need to do everything we can to ensure that when an Oregonian -- whether they're Black, Indigenous, a person of color, rural, low-income, or facing barriers to voting—casts their vote in the mail before the election deadline, they know their vote will count and their voice will be heard.”

As of 2020 there are over 20 states, including Washington and California, that accept ballots after Election Day if they were postmarked on or before Election Day.

Today's measure makes conforming changes to the requirements for return identification envelopes for all electors; extends certain election deadlines; changes the September election date to the fourth Tuesday in

August; and allows county clerks to open the return identification envelopes and begin scanning ballots into the vote tally system upon receipt.

The bill passed 39-21 and now moves to the Senate for consideration.

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