



from the
OREGON HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER

For Immediate Release

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**HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER HELFRICH CALLS FOR PUBLIC HEARING
ON BALLOT MISHANDLING**

SALEM, Ore. – House Republican Leader Jeff Helfrich (R-Hood River) today called for the Secretary of State to appear before the Rules Committee for a hearing on May 31 to answer questions about the chain of custody issues surrounding the return of completed ballots.

Earlier this week, county clerks and the SOS engaged with the US Postal Service to determine why the USPS held completed, mail-in ballots instead of turning them into the elections offices. Despite multiple inquiries, the SOS has failed to answer precisely how many ballots were affected, how many counties were affected, and what election officials are doing to prevent the problem from happening in the future.

“Oregonians deserve to have full faith and trust in our elections system, and it is the Secretary of State’s job to establish and maintain that faith and trust,” **said Helfrich**. “However, as of this writing, the Secretary of State’s office has yet to share precise details of both the problems that occurred and the planned remedy. The people of Oregon deserve answers in full view of the public to these fundamental questions.”

You can read the full letter to House Democrat leadership [here](#).

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Dear Speaker Fahey and Chair Bowman:

As Vice-Chair of the House Rules Committee, I am requesting that you invite the Oregon Secretary of State to the committee hearing on Friday, May 31, 2024. In light of the recent issues arising over completed ballots not being delivered to county elections offices by the United States Postal Service, I feel it is necessary to hear directly from the Secretary of State.

Oregonians deserve to have full faith and trust in our elections system, and it is the Secretary of State's job to establish and maintain that faith and trust. Even today, as I write this letter, the Secretary of State is using the hashtag #TrustedInfo2024 on social media. However, as of this writing, the Secretary of State's office has yet to share any details or plan to prevent these same delays in the November general election. How can we trust their silence?

In a recent Oregon Public Broadcasting article, Molly Woon, the state's elections director said "In no uncertain terms, they [USPS representatives] have said, 'We will fix this. This should not be happening.' We continue to have complete faith in the vote-by-mail system." I look forward to hearing how the SOS and USPS will fix this. Unless I hear a specific plan to prevent similar delays, I find it hard to blindly have the same "complete faith" in the vote-by-mail system.

At a bare minimum, we wish to hear answers to the following questions:

- How many ballots were affected and which counties experienced delays?*
- Specifically, what actions were taken to remedy the current situation?*
- How will the SOS ensure these same delays don't occur for the November election?*

I look forward to receiving an update from the Secretary of State during a House Rules Committee hearing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeff Helfrich". The signature is stylized with a long horizontal stroke and a small upward tick at the end.

*Jeff Helfrich
House Republican Leader*