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Senate Republicans Criticize Extreme Bill Allowing Convicted Felons Including Murderers and Rapists to Vote While in Prison

SALEM, Ore. – Today, the Senate Committee on Judiciary held a [work session](#) on [Senate Bill 579](#), an extreme bill allowing incarcerated criminals to vote in Oregon elections before completing their sentences. It passed along party lines with a 3-2 vote.

“This is truly an egregious bill that should have never seen the light of day. It blatantly disrespects victims of crime, and we stand united in fighting to ensure victims are treated with the dignity they deserve,” **said Senate Republican Leader Tim Knopp (R-Bend)**.

“Some may not know that once felons complete their sentences, their right to vote in Oregon is restored. This often encourages individuals to rejoin their communities as responsible, law-abiding citizens,” **said Deputy Leader Kim Thatcher (R-Keizer)**, Vice-Chair of the Senate Committee on Judiciary. “If passed, SB 579 will impede accountability and disincentivize character rehabilitation. That is extremely concerning.”

“Should our criminal justice system prioritize the rights of victims or the rights of convicted criminals? This misplaced compassion punishes victims of crime. Both sides of the equation need to be considered and SB 579 fails to do that,” **added Senator Dennis Linthicum (R-Klamath Falls)**, member of the Senate Committee on Judiciary.

“If this is the kind of legislation the majority considers ‘bipartisan’, it’s going to be a long and bumpy road to sine die,” **concluded Knopp**.

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