



**Curry County
Board of Commissioners**

David Brock Smith, *Chair*

94235 Moore Street, Suite 122
Gold Beach, OR 97444
541-247-3296, 541-247-2718 Fax
800-243-1996 www.co.curry.or.us

June 3, 2013

Dear Chair Garrett and Rules Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you this afternoon regarding HB 2206 . First, some information regarding Curry County.

Curry County has 22,364 residents and encompasses 1636 square miles of the Southern Oregon Coast and 67 % of this land is managed by the federal government. Of these residents, 57% live in the unincorporated areas of Curry County and 43% live within our three incorporated cities. Curry County collects 22 million dollars in property taxes, although we receive only 1.4 million dollars of that revenue to fund county services and distribute the remaining 20.6 million to our other tax districts. 30% of our property owners do not reside within our county. 18% percent of our residents meet the poverty level of an annual income of less than \$17 thousand dollars. Our current season adjusted unemployment rate is 10.8 percent. Our median age is 54 years young. Curry County has 3,716 veterans, which is the highest percentage per capita than any other county in the state.

I would like to thank this committee, the governor and state legislators for their assistance. As a direct extension of the State of Oregon, counties play a vital role in the overall health and welfare of the citizens of the state. To that end we are here today to work together towards that goal as healthy counties support a healthy State of Oregon. I have some suggestions for HB 2206 over its current amended form that I believe would be in the best interests of my citizens in Curry County and around the state as its current form could be detrimental to our A&T and Clerk/Elections departments that have already been merged and cut to the bone. Suspending any CAFFAA funds would have a negative impact to these departments and having the Secretary of State and Department of Revenue assume these functions would seriously disrupt the Lawfully Elected Assessor and Clerk of Curry County.

Proposed changes would include a fee for service from the unsegregated tax district revenue to support the functions of the Assessor, Tax Collection and Clerk/Elections departments. This fee for service would be based on actual costs needed to fund these service departments that provide said service to the different taxing districts within the county. As long as CAFFAA funds

are kept intact, this fee for services should not exceed 4 percent of tax district monies collected minus any special bonds. With respect to Curry County, this 4 percent would generate \$801,710 which would be more than adequate to minimally fund these service departments, again, as long as CAFFAA funds are kept intact. The provisions of HB 2206 would cease once the county is able to generate the necessary revenue to fund these departments.

Ultimately, utilizing this option to fund these departments will assist in offsetting county general funds to these departments thus making more funds available from the general fund to be allocated to public safety thereby mitigating the revenue burden to my citizenry through other legislation, HB 3453.

Thank you again for the opportunity to address this important legislation and for your consideration of our suggestions. I would be more than happy to answer any questions.

Respectfully,

David Brock Smith, Chair
Curry County Board of Commissioners