



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

PUBLIC SERVICES BUILDING
2051 KAEN ROAD | OREGON CITY, OR 97045

February 10, 2014

Representative Brian Clem, Chair
House Committee on Rural Communities
900 Court Street NE, Room 347
Salem, OR 97301

RE: HB 4029 (Withdrawal of territory from the City of Damascus)

Dear Chair Clem & Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners, I am writing to express our neutrality on HB 4029 as currently drafted, which would provide a path for property owners who own land on the edge or boundary of the City of Damascus to withdraw their land from the City. The Board would be supportive of the bill if amended to make this path applicable only to those tracts of land that are able to annex into an adjacent city and therefore develop at an urban level.

The City of Damascus has yet to adopt a comprehensive plan and development ordinance to guide the urbanization of their land within Metro's Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). As a result, those property owners who are in a position to develop their land have been unable to do so in the absence of an acknowledged comprehensive plan. If passed in its current form, the bill will provide a pathway for property owners along the edge of the City to withdraw their land from the City. Based on the land's location, property owners will have the option to either 1) annex their land into an adjacent city, or 2) revert their land back to unincorporated Clackamas County.

If a tract of land is withdrawn from Damascus and is adjacent to another city, it is likely the property owner will seek annexation into the adjacent city in order to have access to urban services and the potential to develop their land. The Board supports this aspect of the bill, which would facilitate additional industrial development and job creation in the County. However, if a tract of land withdraws from Damascus and is not adjacent to another city, it will return to unincorporated Clackamas County where it would be unable to urbanize primarily due to the lack of urban services and infrastructure in the area. Clackamas County would prefer to see the land remain in cities, where it has the greatest likelihood to develop.

We appreciate Representative Kennemer's attention to this issue and will work cooperatively with him and the impacted cities and residents of Clackamas County to find a path forward on this issue.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our position on HB 4029. Please contact either Jared Anderson (janderson@clackamas.us) or Chris Lyons (clyons@clackamas.us) if you have questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

John Ludlow, Chair
On Behalf of the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners