

The Honorable Val Hoyle
House Committee on Rules
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Representative Hoyle and Members of the committee:

I am Ms. Dale Shafer, the City Manager of Nehalem, Oregon. We are a small city, population 280, on the North Oregon Coast.

I am writing to voice my concerns regarding HB 3505. While I understand the reasoning behind this proposed bill, in actuality it creates a huge burden on cities. Especially on small cities. Nehalem operates with 2 people in the office, myself and the City Recorder. We are responsible for all of the day to day administrative functions of the City and in addition I manage the other staff, and monitor the City as a whole. We are also responsible for the retention of the City's Records.

As a small City with limited space we are very conscious of the records retention schedule from the Secretary of State's Office. Many documents or records currently have a retention schedule of less than three years, such as routine publications, scheduling records and hundreds of other records. Having to retain those for a minimum of three years would take up valuable space and having to store them offsite would cost additional monies to store and retrieve and would place an unnecessary financial burden on small cities.

We strive for transparency with our citizens, and therefore our Minutes, Ordinances, Resolutions, Personnel Handbook etc. are all available online. Those are the things that we normally get requests for. We inform them that the information is online and direct them to our website. They get the information they want right at their fingertips and we are free to continue our normal work. We really don't get simple requests for emails. Those things need research and that costs us time away from our other jobs which translates as loss of money to the City. We need to be able to charge reasonable fees for requests that tie up staff time while we hunt for the information they want and at the same time try to get our normal work done.

Those types of requests usually come from businesses as far away as Florida and they send out blast email requests to multiple cities as they hunt for information. Placing an arbitrary deadline on such requests allows them to cut in line ahead of actual citizens and our businesses that need city services. Having to issue them a written response every seven days can be labor intensive and adds to the cost of the request. We already have our own deadlines for items such as, Payroll, Council Directives, Human Resources, Building and Planning, Budgeting etc. We can't put those things on hold because of a records request with a deadline that fails to take into consideration the need to continue to operate a City on a daily basis with the staffing issues and budget constraints that face all small cities.

I urge a no vote on HB 3505.

Thank you for your consideration of this request!

Dale Shafer
City Manager
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"Yesterday is History, Tomorrow is a Mystery, Today is a Gift. That's why they call it the present". Eleanor Roosevelt