

May 10, 2015

House Revenue Committee

Chair Barnhart and Members of the Committee

My testimony is in opposition of HB 3492, which allows property owners of solar projects to pay a fee in lieu of property taxes for a 20 year period.

When contacting the Department of Revenue, they estimate the fee of \$7,000 is roughly one-third of the amount of property taxes that would otherwise be paid. You have to ask yourself if solar projects that can't support themselves are more important to fund than schools or police. I think every Oregonian would say no. So you have your vote on this bill – an obvious NO.

If you are still in question, consider what the Oregon Supreme Court's decision on PERS will do to county and state budgets. Consider that schools are still at a budget shortage. Consider that some areas don't have law enforcement to even respond to emergencies. Don't choose to make funding worse by a relief in property taxes that isn't a necessity. Solar projects will be developed without this incentive. It's not a do or die for solar projects.

A yes vote can only be interpreted to be a maneuver to put voters in a squeeze to give up their tax kicker and consider a sales tax. But, what if you lose that vote? You will have funded a lot of unnecessary projects with no urgent or real benefit to the economy and the counties and state will be worse off by your efforts. The voters know how you are voting.

Donna Bleiler