

May 28, 2015

Senator Diane Rosenbaum, Chair and the
Oregon Senate Committee on Rules
State Capital
Salem, Oregon 97310

RE: SCR 17 Honoring Hector Macpherson Jr. - September 19, 1918 – March 21, 2015

I wholeheartedly support the approval of SCR 17 to honor Hector Macpherson, Jr. the father of Oregon land use planning. SCR 17 explains Hector's longtime service to his County, State and Country but more should be in the record about his longstanding work to establish the Oregon land use system and protect farmland.

For 50 years, as a farmer, Linn County planning commissioner, State Senator and member of the Land Conservation and Development Commission, Hector Macpherson was the driving force for land use planning and farmland protection in Oregon. He was involved in all phases of the development of the Oregon land use system.

He helped to form the Linn County Planning Commission in the mid 1960s when mobile home parks and other development was approved near his farm in Linn County. As concern for the loss of farmland in Oregon increased he forcefully spoke out against "a valley where neighbor encroaches upon neighbor... a land defiled and unsightly, a monument to man's greed and shortsightedness."

He was an early supporter of state legislation to require local land use planning and supported SB 10 in 1969. Because of his interest in this subject, he ran successfully for the State Senate in 1970. When the Legislative leadership would not establish an interim land use committee to study and develop land use legislation for the 1973 session, Hector formed his own committee to develop legislation. Working with various interest groups and the Governor's office, he developed a bipartisan proposal that became SB 100 which he and Senator Ted Hallock of Portland.

As we all know, SB 100 established our statewide land use system, the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) and the statewide planning goals with which local comprehensive plans and implementing regulations must comply. But for Hector a companion bill, SB 101 "ranks in stature just slightly below SB 100 in importance as my greatest achievement in 1973." This bill established the state's "Agricultural Land Use Policy" (not amended since 1973), reformed the exclusive farm use provisions for county zoning and limited county regulation of farming practices.

On the Senate floor he spoke eloquently about SB 101 when he said: “This bill speaks to the problem we are all concerned about – we know that Oregon’s prime agricultural land is rapidly being urbanized – these limited high value agricultural soil resources should be kept in agricultural production for as long as possible because of the important contribution they make to Oregon’s economy...”

In 1993, he was involved with the development and support for HB 3661 that added new protections for Oregon’s high value agricultural land, new minimum lot sizes and limits on the proliferation of non farm dwellings in the Willamette Valley. To implement this law, he also supported new administrative rules to limit the approval of farm dwellings in exclusive farm use zones while a member of the Land Conservation and Development Commission which SB 100 established.

His Legislative partner, Ted Hallock said that Hector was really interested in just one thing, “the actual nobility of the bill and the language.” And during the ordeal to implement and amend Ballot Measure 37, he reminded us to “remember the first words of the preamble of Senate Bill 100:

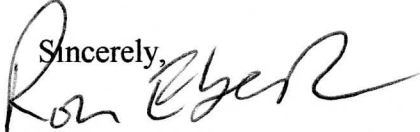
“The Legislative Assembly finds that uncoordinated use of lands within the state threaten the orderly development, the environment of this state and the health, safety, order convenience, prosperity and welfare of the people of this state.”

He believed that “these words are as true today as they were in 1973 when Ted and I proposed them. A new generation of leaders must find a way to balance the need for public and private gain that is acceptable to the majority.”

Hector was a prophet when it came to land use planning with great vision and goals. He believed that SB 100 and SB 101 “often were the only barriers to the decimation of their policy objectives, the counties and their rapacious desire to accommodate land developers. Like Hector we must remember that “it’s a battle in which we can never claim victory.”

But he was secure in his achievements and legacy when he wrote: “As we hand off the baton to successors it is rewarding to know we did our part and ran the good race.” We can all be thankful for what Hector Macpherson did, for the legacy and responsibility he left us and for the very good race he ran.

Thank you for this opportunity and for your support of SCR 17 honoring Hector Macpherson, Jr.

Sincerely,


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