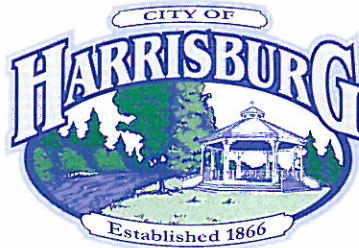


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House Committee on Rules  
Oregon State Capitol Building  
900 Court St NE  
Salem, OR 97301

**Re: House Bill 4130 (HB4130), for Public Hearing Scheduled on Feb 5, 2016.**

To the Honorable Chair Williamson, Vice-Chairs Gilliam and Houle, and Members of the Committee:

The City of Harrisburg would like to join the Oregon Association of Municipal Recordors (OAMR), and the Cities of Roseburg and Wilsonville as being opposed to HB4130 as introduced. We feel that this house bill has a negative impact on municipalities.

Harrisburg is a small City, with a population of 3630. As such, we have only 13 full-time employees, of which only two are able to respond to public records requests. Service to our citizens and governmental transparency is very important to us. We do respond to public disclosure requests as quickly as possible. I manage public disclosure requests, but on occasion, our City Administrator has also responded. We both have many other responsibilities; plus our office has limited staff resources. Placing specific time requests on public disclosure could result in other important duties being neglected, resulting in poor service to our citizens.

The City of Harrisburg does have streamlined fees for public disclosure requests, and we don't charge for electronic records if we are able to provide them within a 15 minute timeframe. However, the bulk of the records we have are in paper format; many of the records that are desired for larger public disclosure requests are in a separate location. We charge only for our actual time, but the way the limits are imposed by HB4130, we will not be able to recoup the actual costs for answering public disclosure requests. Restricting our ability to recover the full costs of research in fulfilling public disclosure requests will lower the value of the services we can provide to the citizens of Harrisburg. Some of the requests we receive are from sources outside the state, and many are outside our jurisdictional boundaries, resulting in public disclosure that's generally not serving the citizens of our community.

The City does not have the capacity to store public records for longer than the time limits established by the current City Records Retention Schedule. In my fifteen years of employment with the City, I have never had a request to look at some of the records that are covered even under the one year retention

time. To hold records for an additional time period doesn't make sense for smaller communities that have restricted space, whether that's server capacity, or space for paper records. Many of the smaller cities in Oregon have limited budgets, and lack the ability to purchase software that helps to organize and rapidly expedite public records for disclosure requests.

We do recognize that the laws can be improved upon, and applaud that effort, however, the Attorney General's Public Records Task Force is currently working on reforming public records law. Because of this, we feel that any efforts to amend public disclosure law are premature. It is more efficient for a thorough review of public records law to occur in this committee. Waiting until the 2017 session will also allow the task force time to fully analyze the public records law. Additional time will allow the task force to fully consider how the law relates to state and local government entities; while still providing transparency in the public sector, and determining how best the law can ultimately serve the citizens of Oregon.

The City of Harrisburg respectfully urges a vote in opposition to HB4130 as introduced prior to the 2016 Short Session. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely;



Michele Eldridge, CMC

City Recorder/Assistant City Administrator