



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF OREGON**

February 12, 2016

To: Senate Committee on Rules
President Pro Tempore Diane Rosenbaum, Chair
Senator Ted Ferrioli, Vice Chair

Re: SB 1573 - Voter and Local Charter Preemption—OPPOSE

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan, grassroots political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. The League has numerous positions related to citizen participation and access. We support city and county home rule and have always advocated that local citizens have the right to bring matters before their local constituents on a variety of issues. We have also long supported our statewide land use planning system **with local implementation**. It is because of these long-standing positions that we ask that you **reject SB 1573**.

The bill **requires** a city to annex territory under certain circumstances whether or not they have the services to support that annexation or whether or not the city's long-term annexation plans fit into this particular property's annexation at this time.

The bill **preempts** local charter provisions, including those where local citizens have determined it is in their best interest to have a vote before annexing property into their city. Yes, these votes can sometimes be a mechanism to limit growth in a city. But more often it allows for a broad citywide conversation on how to pay for the infrastructure and public services such as police and fire should that property become part of the city. The bill does not require the property owner(s) to fund the needed infrastructure nor these important public services. Depending on the size of the property annexed, there may be a need for more schools. All of these conversations occur when an annexation is considered in a public process. This bill doesn't even require a public hearing before the city approves the annexation application.

The bill **does not account for feasibility to serve** because not all cities have systems development charges or other methods to require the annexed property to pay for the cost of these newly required services. It might require that services be provided in an illogical manner that would be more costly than an orderly growth plan. Yes, there is intended under our planning system to be a 20-year land supply in an urban growth boundary and that cities are the best government entities to provide urban level of services. But the current system **does not require** that properties come into cities at the whim of developers or property owners. The current system assumes that local governments and their citizens have **local control** to determine their destiny.

It is because of the above concerns that the League asks that you **vote NO** on SB 1573 and reject this usurpation of local control.

Sincerely,

Norman Turrill
LWV of Oregon President

Peggy Lynch
Natural Resources Coordinator

cc: Senate President Peter Courtney
Speaker of the House Tina Kotek
Senator Lee Beyer