

CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, OREGON

Office of the Mayor and City Council



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March 14, 2017

The Honorable Ann Lininger, Chair
Senate Committee on Economic Development and Trade
901 Court St. NE. H-485
Salem, OR, 97301

RE: Testimony in Opposition of House Bill 2470

Dear Chair Lininger and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the City of Springfield and our City Council, I am testifying in opposition to House Bill 2470.

The City of Springfield currently operates two growing urban renewal districts; Downtown and Glenwood. These voter approved districts are vital opportunity areas for the community, focusing millions of dollars on infrastructure improvements, community assets, housing and business redevelopment. Downtown is experiencing an exciting renewal, with a second installation of pedestrian level lighting underway this spring, façade and building improvements, new housing starts, innovation and incubation spaces, craft manufacturing of food and Springfield products and visitor generating art installations, among many others.

Similarly, Glenwood is also beginning to see the benefits of years of community prioritized planning, now under implementation and resulting in infrastructure reconstruction and mixed-use redevelopment efforts. In both Springfield districts, taxing entities and community members were active participants in successfully supporting voter approved adoption, and remain at the table city-wide ensuring investments and projects are aligned with community-wide priorities.

HB 2470 would increase the current eight member urban renewal board to 13 or more, while also providing single entity veto power over community-wide priority initiatives around forming districts. This would make it difficult to utilize one of the few economic development funding tools available to communities. I believe the existing Oregon law works well, requiring the input from overlapping taxing districts at the right time, early in the visioning and implementation process. Springfield has always prided itself on working closely with our local taxing partners, an effort which is a fundamental core value of how we 'do business.'

In sum, HB 2470 would hamper the effectiveness of an already partner oriented economic development tool while also eliminating our home rule, which allows local voices to make local choices.

Sincerely,

Christine L. Lundberg
Mayor