



# POLK COUNTY

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ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

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Assessor

March 20, 2017  
Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue  
SB 700

Chair Hass, members of the committee, my name is Douglas Schmidt and I am the Polk County Assessor testifying today on behalf of The Oregon State Association of County Assessors (OSACA). At this time, OSACA has chosen to **Oppose** SB 700.

While we believe there are Seniors in this state in need of assistance with their property taxes, there is a mechanism in place to assist them, the current Senior Deferral Program. We ask that our Seniors be assisted through the existing program. If the current Senior Deferral Program is not adequate to meet the needs then that program should be reviewed so there can be a **fair and consistent program for Seniors statewide**.

As the bill is currently written, Assessors have the following concerns:

- Taxes are frozen based on the taxes prior to the application being filed. Any taxes in excess of the frozen taxes are “abated”.
  - o Assessors have no current mechanism to “abate” an overage of taxes.
  - o Assessors have no mechanism to freeze the taxes on an account.
- The frozen taxes are based on a homestead of up to 10 acres.
  - o Assessors do not have accounts broken out in this way.
  - o This would require assessors to do a manual calculation to determine the taxes on the 10 acre homestead.
  - o The 10 acre homestead could create an exemption on income producing property.
- Areas of the state with a high population of Seniors could see a greater impact.
- The frozen tax amount can be transferred to a new home every 3 years.
  - o This will impact the revenue of districts as a Senior moves.
- Assessors will have no way to calculate the tax rates for bond payments.
  - o Bond rates are calculated based on the Assessed Value within a district.
  - o Freezing the taxes will not collect all of the bond taxes that were levied.
  - o Districts could receive a reduced amount for their bond requirements.
- There is no criteria for defining “fixed income”.

For these reasons, we ask the committee not to move this bill forward.

Thank you. If you have any questions I will try and answer them.