



CITY OF ROGUE RIVER

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April 29, 2017

Dear Senators,

As mayor of the City of Rogue River, I am writing to urge you to support SB 114 and/or SB 258.

SB 1573, which these bills would repeal, was a direct attack on our home rule authority. Those of us who have voter approval annexations are bound by oath to uphold our City Charters, just as you are bound by oath to uphold the Constitution of the State of Oregon, which granted us these rights:

“.....The initiative and referendum powers reserved to the people by this constitution are hereby reserved to the legal voters of every municipality and district, as to all local, special and municipal legislation of every character, in or for their respective municipalities or districts..... (Oregon Constitution, Article IV § 1a, now § 1(5))The Legislative Assembly shall not enact, amend, or repeal any charter or act of incorporation for any municipality, city or town. The legal voters of every city and town are hereby granted power to enact and amend their municipal charter, subject to the constitution and criminal laws of the state of Oregon. (Oregon Const., Article XI § 2)”

SB 1573 put us in a Catch-22 situation. My city cannot amend its charter without voter approval and those same voters have reserved the right to approve all annexations. The State of Oregon cannot amend my charter as stated in Article XI § 2 above. The only solution that I can see is to repeal SB 1573 and then find a better and lawful remedy to the affordable housing crisis we currently have in Oregon.

It should be noted that the majority of voter approved annexations have been decided favorably and it is my opinion that those that were rejected by the voters were done so for good reason; particularly when the development would have had negative impacts on the jurisdiction's ability to provide basic services such as water and waste water treatment. This is a big concern for small municipalities like Rogue River, where too large of a development could put an unreasonable burden on the existing systems and our unique geographic constraints could make it difficult to safely move traffic through the town. These types of impacts can't be remedied through the increase in tax base or system development charges – the SDCs would be too high, adding to the cost of the finished home and negating the creation of *affordable* housing.

Sincerely,

Pam VanArsdale, Mayor



TREE CITY USA

We are an AAEOE and comply with Section 504 of the Rehab. Act of 1973

"Home of the National Rooster Crowing Contest"

