

## Statement Supporting SB 258 and SB 114

To: Senate Committee on Environmental and Natural Resources

From: Janice Stanger, Philomath resident and homeowner

Date: March 30, 2017

I enjoy my home in Philomath, having moved to Oregon in October, 2015. I have become deeply involved in making sure that growth in this community is wise, sustainable, and supportable by infrastructure and other resources. In talking with neighbors, I have found overwhelming consensus on this goal. In order to accomplish it, residents must be able to vote on proposed annexations, which impact everyone in the community in terms of both quality of life and finances. Therefore, SB 258 and/or SB 114 must be passed so that residents can continue to shape the ongoing development and growth of the communities they call home.

Here are three key reasons why SB 258/114 must be passed as soon as possible:

1. Resources and infrastructure may not exist to support proposed annexations, and may not be able to be built in a reasonable length of time (if ever). This is the case in Philomath in a recent election. While Philomath residents have approved several annexations to grow the City at a reasonable pace, one annexation was proposed that would have increased the City's population by 50% by developing a 159 acre parcel. Philomath does not have enough water to supply those additional residents as well as existing residents. How could the proposed development proceed without sufficient water? In addition, the City's main street already can be backed up until it resembles a Los Angeles traffic jam, even in the middle of the day. With 50% more cars on the road, the quality of life and even safety of residents and their children would have been severely impacted for the worse had the annexation been forced on them. SB 1573 does not take account of any such factors.
2. SB 1573 will not increase the supply of affordable housing. Again using a local example, there are already many undeveloped home sites in Philomath which could be devoted to affordable housing, but this is not happening. The demand does not exist for a massive amount of residential development here, as there are not sufficient local jobs and people do not want to commute in the heavy traffic. To create affordable housing will require an integrated effort of government and local communities to assure not just houses/apartments, but also employment, transportation, education, and other infrastructure. SB 1573 is a simplistic approach to a complex problem, and will never work. It will accomplish only more money to special interests, while adding to community costs and problems that actually stand in the way of more affordable housing.
3. SB 1573 sets a dangerous precedent in allowing the State Legislature to interfere with the home rule embodied in city charters. The Oregon Constitution wisely prohibits the Legislature from forcing cities to amend or repeal their charters. It is imperative that the Legislature respects and upholds voter rights by repealing SB 1573.

To summarize, voters across Oregon will be severely adversely affected unless SB 1573 is repealed. Therefore, I strongly urge you to pass SB 258 and/or SB 114 to accomplish this goal. Thank you for your consideration.