

From: Steve Kuske
To: [SENR Exhibits](#)
Subject: Statement in SUPPORT of SB 114 and SB 258
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Statement in SUPPORT of SB 114 and SB 258

TO: Senate Committee on Environment & Natural Resource
FROM: Stephen Kuske, Resident of Sherwood, Oregon
DATE: April 2, 2017

Dear Senators,

As a resident of Sherwood, I am generally concerned about the effects of annexation and — even without annexation — the overburdening of already-strained infrastructure. I urge your support for Senate Bill 258 and/or Senate Bill 114 as a corrective measure.

Each point of concern about SB 1573 (2016) is a consideration favoring passage of SB 258/114:

- The current policy (SB 1573) establishes a precedent of unwarranted state preemption. Although it may be within the State Legislature’s purview to dictate the terms of annexation to cities, the power to preempt local control should be balanced against the interest of local control. Our city has three times voted overwhelmingly to limit unwarranted growth. In outlining annexation procedures, ORS Chapter 222 had long deferred to City Charters that require consent from a city’s electorate. Additionally, Oregon courts have long held that while the legal criteria surrounding annexations are a matter of statewide concern, questions of the processes used are best left to local consideration. Senate Bill 258/114 respects that longstanding precedent.
- There is no urgency leading to such a drastic change. While additional work clearly needs to be undertaken to ensure that the supply keeps pace with economic demand, there is no “emergency” at this point justifying a legislative dismantling of city charters.
- The current policy (SB 1573) exposes residents to increased costs and demands on infrastructure. Currently, the process outlined by SB 1573 (2016) does not require a public hearing before annexation occurs. Despite the included consideration of a city’s comprehensive plan, that process does not allow for sufficient examination into the increased demands of transportation infrastructure, water and sewer services, schools, emergency services, or other potential costs. Senate Bill 258/114 will help ensure that these concerns are taken into account and provided for in a citywide conversation.

In conclusion, while Senate Bill 1573 (2016) was a well-intentioned measure aimed at addressing a specific concern, it is a **drastic overreach**. The State already has sufficient legal mechanisms in place (such as land use planning goals) to ensure coordination and uniformity of criteria. The process of city expansion should be a local discussion, where citizens are able to make a measured consideration of the costs and benefits involved in an accountable and transparent manner.

Please vote YES on Senate Bill 258/114.

Please return home rule for annexations to the cities in the State of Oregon.

Thank you,

Stephen Kuske
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