



American Planning Association
Oregon Chapter

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Making Great Communities Happen

April 5, 2017

Senator Michael Dembrow, Chair
Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association testimony to the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources in opposition to SB 602

Dear Chair Dembrow and Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association (OAPA) is an independent, statewide, not-for-profit educational organization with 850 members that provides leadership in the development of vital communities by advocating excellence in community planning, promoting education and citizen empowerment, and providing the tools and support necessary to meet the challenges of growth and change.

Our organization has reviewed SB 602 and opposes the bill as drafted. **We respectfully ask that the Committee not advance the bill out of committee.**

As proposed, this bill would allow a local government, meeting certain requirements of the statewide land use planning goal relating to economic activity (Goal 9), to bypass the State's established planning process by waiving statewide goals.

The bill is unclear as to what the "certain requirements" of Goal 9 would be. This vague language would allow for a wide range of potentially subjective and arbitrary interpretations to justify land use actions that cannot comply with statewide goals.

Goal 9 already provides clear guidance to local governments planning for long-term economic growth in relation to land use. This is actualized in a local government's comprehensive plan, which has a 20-year horizon and takes into account a number of factors related to economic development, including: the availability of land, labor market factors, educational programs, public facilities, current market forces, and the availability of renewable and non-renewable resources. Goal 9 directs local governments to "provide for at least an adequate supply of sites of suitable sizes, types, locations, and service levels for a variety of industrial and commercial uses," and limits incompatible uses on or near sites zoned for specific industrial and commercial uses.

In the event an exemption from a goal is needed, a local government may justify the exemption through the process provided in ORS 197.732.

The Oregon state planning goals are fundamental to sound long term planning for the needs of both urban and rural communities throughout the state. They ensure that all cities and counties plan comprehensively and consider the long-term consequences of the decisions they make.

Comprehensive land use planning is, by its nature, a deliberate and rational process that provides for the long term. It works to balance the need for economic development with the needs for housing, public services, and the natural environment. All of the goals comprising the Oregon Statewide Planning Goals and Guidelines work together to provide this balance.

We recognize the pressures faced by Oregon cities facing demographic and economic change, and we appreciate the motivations and efforts of our elected and appointed officials to respond to these changes. This bill would upset the balance between competing land use needs that has been carefully considered through the comprehensive plan process, and we will destabilize the foundation of Oregon's unique statewide planning practice.

The Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association strongly urges the Committee to not pass SB 602.

Sincerely,



Jeannine Rustad, JD, President
Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association