

From: Skyline Grange
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Cc: [LRO](#)
Subject: Opposition to HB 181
Date: Monday, May 08, 2017 12:53:02 PM

RE: Skyline Grange #894's Opposition to SB 181

SB 181A has come to our attention. Loss of our property tax exemption, and thus a significant increase in Grange property taxes would devastate our ability to exist and to support our local community.

Skyline Grange #894 has great concern about SB 181's implications for our Grange and to other Granges in Oregon. Our Grange building is a real community asset and our activities are vital to nurturing a sense of community in our semi-rural area of Multnomah County. Loss of property tax exemption, and thus a significant increase in property taxes would devastate our ability to support our community. Our building is just about the only local place where government agencies can meet with local residents to provide information and have a dialog, where local neighborhood associations can meet, where educational topics can be presented, such as ODA's Japanese beetle eradication program, WMSWCD's noxious weed presentations, and community disaster preparation planning. These FREE educational events are held frequently and are well attended.

We Skyline Grangers are a dedicated group of volunteers who do our best for our community. But being a volunteer organization means mistakes happen. A number of years ago, our Master died leaving new, well-meaning, but inexperienced officers without a clear indication of some compulsory administrative responsibilities. Filing taxes did not happen and we lost our IRS tax exempt status, requiring a major amount of work to regain it. From that experience, we learned to make sure we annually file with the Oregon Secretary of State, pay Multnomah County property taxes, and file Form 990 in a timely fashion. We shudder to think that if SB 181 had been in effect when we were in this period of administrative ignorance, we might have lost our property tax exemption too, which would have been much more devastating than the \$400 fine from the IRS.

Instituting additional reporting requirements and punishing late reports from volunteer organizations with loss of the property tax exemption seems excessive to us. We also know that the land our Grange sits on has significant value, and having to pay the commercial rate for property taxes would be impossible as we are mostly funded by fundraisers that require much volunteer time. **This bill could cost us to lose our building (and in effect our community center) due to a simple unintentional error or oversight.**

We understand the grave financial strains on Oregon State and that there is an urgent

need for increased revenue. We just do not think SB 181 should be part of the answer to the budget deficient. We urge you to reject SB 181. It adds an unnecessary administrative burden to community Granges, Granges that benefit the health and well-being of their communities. Please do not pass this Bill.

With sincerity,

Sen Speroff, Master
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