



March 28, 2019

TO: House Committee on Agriculture and Land Use

FROM: The Concord Partnership Board of Directors

Subject: House Bill 3099

The Concord Partnership (TCP) Board of Directors thank you for the opportunity to comment on House Bill 3099. TCP is a small non-profit, community-based organization advocating for repurposing of the historic Concord School property as a park and community center that will serve the residents of North Clackamas Parks and Recreation District (NCPRD). We have been working closely with NCPRD and Clackamas County representing community interests in planning for the Concord property's future. While our role in the local community is mainly focused on this project, we have a vested interest in matters that affect the overall health of the District and its abilities to efficiently, effectively and equitably serve the needs of residents district wide. And as concerned citizens, we have an interest in proposed legislation that will potentially affect the abilities of special districts and county service districts statewide in providing for the needs of their service populations.

TCP is firmly opposed to HB 3099. We have followed the interactions between NCPRD, the County and the City of Happy Valley, and have become aware of many facts concerning the dispute that triggered the proposed legislation; we have no doubt that relevant facts are being presented to the Committee by others. Since the introduction of HB 3099, we have reviewed the position statement distributed by Happy Valley officials, and the statement representing the collective position of Clackamas County, NCPRD, the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) and the Special Districts Association of Oregon (SDAO). While it is not our place to judge the desire of Happy Valley officials to withdraw the City from the District, we agree with the collective position of these other public entities in opposing this Bill.

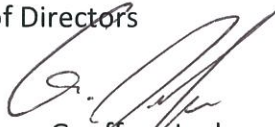
In short, proponents of the Bill seek to relieve the City of its obligation to follow the existing process for withdrawal from the District as now required under ORS 198, a process which includes provisions designed to help safeguard against potential consequences affecting the District's larger service population. Under the proposed statutory amendments, any city in Oregon could withdraw from a service district without regard for potential adverse consequences for the district at large. Potential consequences can include: diminished economies of scale, limited abilities to provide services efficiently, effectively and equitably; inability to manage facilities that may become stranded with changes in district boundaries; and reluctance of service districts to annex and invest within city boundaries.

HB 3099 is not a solution to the dispute which prompted it, and the Legislature should not be involved other than to reject it. Negotiations aimed at reaching an amicable solution already underway between NCPRD and the City should be allowed to continue unencumbered by a threat of bad legislation. Based on TCP's own experience working with NCPRD and Clackamas County, we can attest to their sincere and continued efforts to improve the provision of needed services to all District residents. Please take responsible action by rejecting HB 3099.

Respectfully,

The Concord Partnership Board of Directors


Ron Campbell


Geoffrey Janke


Michael Schmeer