

June 19, 2019

Oregon House of Representatives Committee on Rules  
Oregon State Capital, Salem, Oregon

Dear Rules Committee,

My name is Jim Syring and I am a current resident of the City of Happy Valley and was formally in the previous City of Damascus. I am here to **please ask for your support on Senate Bill 226**. The bill has moved on to your committee after a **27-1 YES vote** from the Senate this week.

As you are probably well aware, the former city of Damascus for **12 years** up through 2016 was filled with **unprecedented** dysfunction. We were imprisoned in a city, that had early on had incapable leaders who sued their own citizens to keep us from de-annexing, and where we were unable to ever pass a state mandated comprehensive plan. A Marion County Judge verbally stated back in 2014 that Damascus had committed **"Municipal Suicide"**.

On May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016 that all ended when the majority of our citizens voted in a **landslide 66% victory** to disincorporate Damascus. **Thank you from our citizens** for your support on HB 3085 & 3086 to make that election happen.

Since Damascus was disincorporated in 2016, my family and many others along the Western border with Happy Valley have **willingly chosen** to annex to the City of Happy Valley. We sought to annex to a city that would protect us, represent us, that had respectable leaders, to have services and a community atmosphere that we were deprived of in Damascus, and to finally have a comprehensive plan and future opportunities for the development of our land.

A total of **249 tax lots consisting of 1,267 acres** of previous Damascus properties have chosen to annex to Happy Valley, with many others now wanting to follow. In 2018, Metro funded a \$300,000 grant to Happy Valley and our citizens have been participating in a land use planning project called the Pleasant Valley-North Carver Comprehensive Plan, scheduled for completion in March of next year.

Property owners have been involved in Happy Valley citizen committees, been assigned to the Planning Commission, and have become part of the Happy Valley family.

The latest Court of Appeals ruling has caused **confusion and anxiety** in our community, especially with the self proclaimed new Mayor and his self appointed illegitimate council casting doubt, making false accusations, and **threatening** our ability to stay annexed to Happy Valley.

I am speaking for and representing not only the 1,267 acres of landowners who have annexed to Happy valley, but the thousands of our other friends & neighbors who we voted together with in a landslide majority block in 2016, to end Damascus forever.

The current “so called” Mayor and council is frightening our community by making threatening statements against citizens and elected government representatives, and we as the majority of citizens will stand **together and United**. They are a very small group and do not represent the interests of the majority of our citizens.

We **please** ask for your support and your help to pass this bill to fix the issue that will get our community back to the **peace and harmony**, we have experienced the past 3 years since disincorporation.

Thank you **very much** for your consideration from our community.

Jim Syring  
20060 SE Foster Rd  
Damascus, Oregon 97089  
503-658-4487