



Lake County Board of Commissioners

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Barry Shullanberger, Commissioner
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February 7, 2022

2022 Oregon Legislature
Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire Recovery

Subject: SB 1582

Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Kennemer, Members of the Committee:

Lake County supports and advocates on many matters pertaining to wildfire recovery and prevention, as well as matters of importance to county government, and therefore we are writing today in opposition to SB-1582.

We find that SB-1582 would allow a rural fire protection district board to forcibly annex property within seven road miles of a station into the district with no appropriate representative process for voters or taxpayers. No other taxing district is granted such unilateral and unchecked authority. We believe that it is in essence "taxation without consent", with no promise or guarantee of additional apparatus or services.

It's worth noting that the rural fire protection district proposing this bill has a permanent tax rate of \$3.17 per thousand while Douglas County's permanent rate is \$1.11 per thousand.

For a home with assessed value of \$150k to \$350k, a property owner would likely experience an increase in their property tax bill of \$500 to \$1000 annually with no vote in the matter. This increased cost could disproportionately hurt rural property owners on fixed incomes.

Under current statute, a rural fire protection district can undertake annexation proceedings by securing support from property owners. Districts are also currently allowed to bill for costs of services delivered to those outside of district boundaries.

Lake County's position is that existing statutory tools are sufficient to facilitate the formation and growth of rural fire protection districts while honoring local control over budget priorities via public votes.

Respectfully submitted,

Barry Shullanberger
Commissioner

James Williams
Commissioner