

Submitter: Eamonn Reynolds-Mohler
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: HJR201

Dear House Committee On Rules,

Thank you for considering my written testimony on HJR 201. My family and I vehemently oppose this measure and we ask you all to vote No. The simple concept of transferring property taxation authority away from local government and giving it to the State Legislature is flawed and inefficient. Towns and Cities are their own unique communities with unique needs and circumstances; it is counter productive, to say the least, to allow for the voice of different municipalities, especially ones with a niche, concentrated political philosophy that is not shared by all, to have influence over well run towns and counties. We would oppose this action regardless of specific circumstances, but unfortunately Oregon, mainly Portland, is wrestling with very unique circumstances that make our opposition vehement in nature.

Awarding a Portland-heavy state legislature authority over all property taxes and removing the constitutionally guaranteed limit on property taxation is wrong and misguided. It's even more disturbing that it's being proposed for 'public safety', as it's been this same Portland-based voting block and Portland-heavy state legislature that reduced prison time for theft, released criminals from prison early, made drugs legal, and defunded the police, effectively sacrificing public safety at the alter of misguided policy that panders to a niche social perspective. Clackamas County is upholding public safety just fine while being in charge of property taxation; while Multnomah county is firmly in the opposite direction. Unfortunately, as Portland votes, so votes the state. Giving Portland voters an outsized say in other towns' and counties' property taxes is irresponsible and unfair.

We moved out of Portland for a reason and hope to raise our two young children in this area. This is not a 'blue vs. red' perspective as all counties, regardless of party affiliation, deserve this most basic level of autonomy. The current direction and tax policies of Portland based elected officials and their voting base have proven wrong, and what's most frustrating is many of us knew they were wrong when proposed, just as we know this is wrong too.

We urge you all to vote No on HJR 201. For those who vote yes, we will certainly cast our vote to your opposition in the next election. Now more than ever this state needs checks and balances, and with a democrat-heavy state legislature, locational decision making is one of the few remaining guardrails against one political voice/philosophy dominating all.

Thank you again for listening and for your public service.