

Submitter: Katie Miller
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: HB4026

The right to a referendum is our citizens' right in the democratic process, and we are a democratic country. How dare the bringers of this bill try to make our democracy into a dictatorship, just to favor the home builders, the increased tax revenue, the profiteers, and the will of one tiny town's City Council in Oregon, who is upset and wants to prevent its citizens from voting against the City Council's decision. They know the people will vote against their huge expansion plan, thus the reason why the taking away of referendum's is in this bill.

I'd like to say, the people of North Plains aren't opposed to growth, just huge growth. But the City of North Plains' plan is HUGE, coming in at 855 acres! We don't need to ruin pave over all that farmland!

Also, I and other North Plains residents have been closed out of the process. The city created this plan mainly with external stakeholders: landowners looking to sell for millions and developers. They failed to properly notice their original decision in the newspaper and so it was remanded back to them. Even though the original decision was invalidated, they said repeatedly that it was final and we couldn't give comment on anything but new amendments. After the city passed the resolution a second time, 10% percent of our community signed a petition asking to recall the decision. Instead of taking this as a queue that the community wants to be involved in the decision, the city is now trying to remove our right to participate in democracy. They advocated to insert the -1 amendment into HB 4026 at the last minute (Friday afternoon, mid-session, before a 3-day weekend) to take the right to a referendum away from all Oregonians, and they want to make this provision retroactive to deny us the vote we just asked for.

We want the city to plan, but with the community at the table. The city says that this exact UGB plan is required by the state, but that is false. North Plains is required to do a 20-year planning process - it is not required to enact this exact plan that their consultants and monied interests have designed. Many of us do not feel that North Plains' expansion by 2.2 times - the biggest UGB expansion by percentage in Oregon's history - is necessary, and we want more say about what industries we invite in, how we build housing that's within working families' means, how we revitalize our city center which doesn't even have a grocery store, and how we make sure that agriculture around our city can continue to thrive.