

February 20, 2024

RE: Opposition to HB 4026-1

Chair Fahey, Vice-Chairs Helfrich and Kropf, Members of the House Committee on Rules:

For the record, my name is John Platt and I am the owner and operator of Helvetia Vineyards and Winery located in the Helvetia community, adjacent to the City of North Plains. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

I urge you to oppose the -1 amendment to House Bill 4026, a bill that “Requires the Secretary of State to study how to improve voter access in this state.”

How ironic!

A bill to improve voter access in the state is amended to remove the constitutional requirement of referenda that is applied to local government action by prohibiting a specific referendum retroactively that was the subject of a petition signed by voters within the City of North Plains.

While there are many reasons why this amendment is bad policy regarding land use that have been enumerated by other witnesses, this amendment on its face is an insult to the notions of democracy embodied in the Oregon Constitution and should be dismissed summarily.