

March 5, 2024

RE: Opposition to HB 4026

Chair Lieber, Senators Knopp, Hansell, Manning and Steiner

Please, if you care about Oregon's unique and resource effective land use system and, particularly, Oregon's Constitution, round-file this anti-democratic bill.

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 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 was amended in the Lower House 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.

As for the Oregon land use system, the Oregon Farm Bureau and 1000 Friends of Oregon, two of the strongest supporters of the Oregon system, have opposed this anti-democratic power-grab masking under the title of a study on how to improve voter access in this state. Please join them.