

Submitter: Commissioner Mary Starrett

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3518

Subject: Support for Oregon House Bill 3518

Chair Nathanson and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of the overarching concept of HB 3518; re-enabling County Assessors and Tax Collectors to effectively administer the property tax program for citizens and the taxing districts within their respective counties. As introduced, HB 3518 would stabilize, diversify, and index the County Assessment Function Funding Assistance Account (CAFFA) funding mechanisms.

I find these elements to be appropriate public policy and thank you and the Committee for addressing an issue that has gone largely overlooked since the recession of 2008 and the Legislature's claw back of State General Fund support for CAFFA.

Underfunded Assessment and Tax offices can lead to inadequate administration of the Oregon Property Tax System, wherein money is being left on the table and some Oregonians not paying their fair share to support schools, police, fire protection, and other government services.

The legislative intent of establishing the CAFFA fund was to shore up a failing property tax program. At one-point CAFFA supported 30-40% of the cost of the local Assessment and Taxation function. Yet in FY 2023-24, the CAFFA fund paid just 12% of the cost of the A&T system and has declined further since then. County governing bodies are left to account for the remaining 88-90% If passed, House Bill 3518 will provide much-needed long-term and stabilized funding to ensure that our property tax policies and programs remain effective, equitable, and sustainable. I appreciate your leadership on this important issue and respectfully request your continued support in advancing this legislation.

Sincerely,

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Yamhill County Commissioner  
Vice Chair, Mary Starrett