

Submitter: Patty Dorroh  
On Behalf Of: VOTERS  
Committee: House Committee On Rules  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3499

Thank you for allowing submission of written testimony in SUPPORT OF HB 3499 WITH AMENDMENTS. My name is Patty Dorroh and I have the honor and privilege of serving as Harney County Commissioner.

Passage of this bill - with needed additional amendments - will bring INTEGRITY to the urban renewal statute(s) that are currently lacking. Existing legislation is patently unfair and currently enables a municipality seeking urban renewal status to, in essence, make an end-run around the affected voters and county taxing districts to TAKE tax revenue from these other taxing districts without their participation and vote to choose to do so. It places a tremendous burden on the affected taxing districts who lose their much-needed property tax revenue for an urban renewal agency to pursue projects over which the affected taxing districts generally have no say.

Harney County is experiencing a period of anticipated declining property tax revenue where every dollar is needed to provide all the services across all our taxing districts. Our critical access frontier rural hospital is also facing challenges in sustaining sufficient capacity and financing. The shift of tax revenue from our County, our Hospital, and all our other local taxing districts – to establish a local city urban renewal agency - without a vote of all affected tax payers – is absolutely wrong, it happened, and it is harming our county over all.

Harney County supports amendments to Chapter 457 of the Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS), including those proposed by HB 3499, to address these concerns. The provisions of HB 3499 requiring a vote of the citizens of the municipality provides a beginning of a system of checks on the authority of citizens to divert money from other taxing districts in pursuit of urban renewal. But we need to go further. Let's fix it completely: Harney County believes that HB 3499 helps but does not go far enough. No municipality should be allowed to unilaterally establish and manage an urban renewal program with taxpayer funds from other taxing districts, including the county, without a full vote of all the voters in all of the taxing districts.

Harney County believes strongly that the entities who will ultimately pay for the projects financed by an urban renewal plan must have a voice and a full vote in deciding whether or not they will have to forgo that revenue in pursuit of urban renewal projects for one municipality.

Please amend the ORS to require that municipalities get the consent of ALL the other taxing districts before spending those taxing districts' revenue. Please let ALL the

affected people decide. I have the utmost confidence in the people of Oregon to decide how to best prioritize their local needs and this bill is an example of attempting to address these matters. Thank you for supporting passage of HB 3499 with amendments. We truly appreciate it.