

Submitter: Dean Moberg

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Rules

Measure: HB4026

Dear Chair Lieber, Vice-chair Knopp, and members of the Senate Rules Committee,

I'm writing to urge a no vote on HB-4026, which seeks to prevent the use of ballot measures to question a city's proposed Urban Growth Boundary expansion (UGB).

This bill appears to be aimed mostly at a situation in the City of North Plains in Washington County (the county where I reside). In 2023 the North Plains City Council proposed to expand its UGB and double in size. I'm part of a grassroots local effort comprised of rural and urban residents, farmers and non-farmers, Republicans and Democrats, who testified before the North Plains City Council, requesting that the size of the proposed UGB expansion be reduced. When that effort failed, we gathered signatures from hundreds of North Plains residents to put forth a ballot measure requesting that the City reconsider the size of this expansion. The ballot measure is Washington County 34-327, is already listed on the county's elections division website, and has already received approved statements for the voters pamphlet. I believe the Washington County Planning Commission and Washington County Commissioners have decided to wait for the vote on this ballot measure before they make decisions on whether they endorse the UGB expansion.

The grassroots effort of which I am a part is not against growth. We just think urban growth should be smart and not huge.

I believe Legislative Counsel has determined that the bill is probably redundant or possibly unconstitutional. In any case, it's not needed and the only concrete effect it will have is to make trajectory of this one ballot measure unclear. Since the use of ballot measures regarding UGB expansions is either already prohibited or enshrined in the Oregon Constitution, I think the issue needs to be solved within the judicial system, not by the legislative branch. HB-4026 would muddy that judicial process and, in the process, could temporarily take away a constitutional right of the residents of North Plains to vote on their ballot measure.

Please vote to not release this bill to the floor.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and thank you for your service to Oregon.

Dean Moberg
Unincorporated Washington County