

Submitter: John Weigant
On Behalf Of: Elders Climate Action-OR Chapter
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: HB3414

Dear Rules Committee (Written as of 6/8/2023, 9:00 am)

I registered Republican when Mark Hatfield and Tom McCall were governors. These leaders showed immense foresight in creating Oregon's superb land use system. I've been a high school physics teacher, urban planner with a specialty in population projection, and a software consultant. Now I'm a climate activist and futurist. As of this moment, testimony on HB 3414 is listed as 110 opposed and 5 support, 3 of which oppose Dash 17. Dash 18, submitted by Rep Rayfield of Corvallis (where I lived for 20 years), whom I trust, has merit, but time is too short to read and understand a 20-page bill in the time available.

I disagree with the SMS -18 projection that Oregon will need 500,000 new housing units by 2040. The laws of physics (those of conservation of mass and energy) say growth has limits. Climate change is forcing us to confront those limits, first identified in "The Limits to Growth" in 1962, and repeatedly validated since. The law of conservation of momentum, when applied to cultural momentum, wants to keep the economic momentum we have had, powered by capitalism, which assumes growth has no limits. By law, current urban growth boundaries must include 20 years of projected growth. We won't get it, because the chaos resulting from climate change and limits to growth will cause a downturn in population, a world-wide trend, being experienced in Oregon currently. DO NOT EXPAND URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARIES, as dash 17 would permit.

The legislature must keep fundamentals in mind: Mass and energy limit growth. Cultural momentum wants to continue, already unsustainable. One thing has no growth limits: information. Mass and energy ultimately determine QUANTITY. Information determines QUALITY. So things can always get better, even if they can't get bigger. A BETTER Oregon is our goal, not a bigger one. World population is likely to decline by half by 2100. Oregon's share of that means that much housing and other infrastructure apparently needed now will become useless in the future. The laws of this state and nation cannot override the laws of physics.

Realize we all live according to our paradigms, or worldviews. The "Conservative" paradigm is identical with law of conservation of momentum. That momentum cannot be sustained, and will cause great misery ahead. Your actions must recognize the changes needed.

As a final comment, I believe emergency clauses should be reserved for emergencies. This measure is not an emergency, and should not be rushed. Thank you for your attention.

John A. Weigant