

To all whom it does concern,

I am Vice Chair of the Jefferson Westside Neighbors in Eugene. I am writing in regard to the ill-conceived, anti-democratic, train-wreck-of-a-bill that HB2001 is. A story to illustrate my point:

My uncle, the honorable Judge Richard D. Barber, was a circuit court judge in Marion County for more than 4 decades. Upon his retirement, he served as a volunteer, modern-day "circuit rider," wherein he managed to accomplish his goal of presiding over at least one circuit court case in every single Oregon county courthouse, the only person to ever do so.

During uncle Dick's long judicial service, he made the acquaintance of, and developed lasting friendships with, many of the judicial, legislative, and executive luminaries in Oregon history. One of these luminaries was governor Tom McCall. My family joined my uncle and his family and many friends at the beach each July for his birthday bash. At the party in 1975, I met former governor McCall, the visionary who led the charge in the creation of our land use planning laws (SB100). (Note: I met former UO track coach Bill Bowerman at around the same time, and was struck by the similarity between him and Tom McCall, both being tall, imposing, somewhat gruff in demeanor, and with iron grip handshakes)

I had learned about SB100 in my high school social studies class, and I engaged the governor on the topic. He was pleased that a teenager had interest in his work, and expounded upon the central tenets of: a.) the preservation of Oregon's "world class" forest and farm lands, and b.) giving the citizenry a key role in the creation of local code.

I told him about my summer job of moving irrigation pipe and bucking hay on a Willamette Valley farm, and of my appreciation of our beautiful forests in the Coast and Cascade ranges. I was also curious about his regard for the citizen voice, especially given his well-known, though not necessarily understood as tongue-in-cheek, comment to out-of-staters: "I urge them to come and come many, many times to enjoy the beauty of Oregon. But I also ask them, for heaven's sake, don't move here to live."

He laughed heartily at my question, stating that yes, he would like to see Oregon remain much as it was in 1975, but that he knew change was coming. He emphasized that this reality is exactly why he wanted the citizens to have a voice in how things change as we grow. He noted that SB100 was intended to create the structure within which the people could work to develop code in their individual municipalities, but that the process must necessarily be set up to thoroughly engage those who will have to live with the changes. To me, at age 16, this seemed like a no-brainer. I naively assumed that, this being a democracy, of course we individual citizens would have a strong voice in our governance. Silly, ignorant kid was I.

HB2001 will effectively denude SB100 by demolishing the first two goals of SB100 (Citizen Involvement, and Planning). How can any of you seriously consider voting for this flawed, dare I say "idiotic" legislation? In all due respect, I urge you to send this piece of crap to the burner and start over again.

Thanks!

Tom Happy