



CITY OF ASTORIA

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February 20, 2019

Re: SJR 2 and SJR 21

To: Chair, Senator Mark Hass and Members of the Senate Finance and Revenue Committee

Oregon's property tax system is broken and reform is overdue. We have homes that sell for similar prices in our cities that have very different tax bills.

The same is true for businesses. We need property tax reform and starting with restoring equity to the tax system is an excellent place to start.

Reform is very difficult because most of the property tax law (Measure 5 and 50) is in the constitution.

We support SJR 21 as it simply would move Measure 50 from the Constitution into statute upon a vote of the people. Once in statute, the law can be revised, and the complex details worked out by the legislature and stakeholders.

We also support the goal of SJR 2 which seems to be to restore equity by moving valuation of properties back to at least 75% of real market value for property tax assessment purposes.

The bill would also provide primary residences with a partial homestead exemption to temper the change to real market valuation. The details of the exemption will be important, and we look forward to continued discussions.

We understand these bills are starting places and we thank the committee for beginning work to address the unfairness and complexities of our property tax system.

Sincerely,

Bruce Jones
Mayor of Astoria