

Please Support HB 2560

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2560.

Friends of Yamhill County supports this bill making permanent remote access and participation in public meetings. An informed citizenry and full public participation make for better deliberation and decision making.

It should not be made the only option as there are barriers for this as well as the pre-COVID-19 methods. Zoom and related platforms have had their share of glitches, but organizations are learning and investing in the technology.

This bill would allow jurisdictions to continue to improve without fear of stranded investment. There are savings of time and travel costs, especially in remote areas. Less traffic on the roads are safety and emissions issues.

As a resident of a rural area with limited telecommunication investment COVID-19 has raised again the specter of the digital divide. I mention this not as a reason to oppose this bill but rather to add this to the list of reasons to work toward expanded broadband access.

Even when schools fully reopen students will need web access to get the best education. More and more public and private enterprises have stopped publishing material in hard copies. Old DSL infrastructure does not support streaming content.

But a broadband aspirational goal should not prevent passing this bill.

Thank you.

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Friends of Yamhill County