



MEDFORD

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

March 23, 2021

Members of the Committee,

I want to be clear that I am providing this feedback from the perspective of a Mayor of a major Southern Oregon city and as the former police chief and chief policy advisor from that same city, but my comments are not on behalf of the city or the Medford City Council. They are mine alone.

Regarding SB 742, I am in full support.

As the former Chief of Police and someone with over 30 years in law enforcement, I have witnessed firsthand the impact crime has on communities and specifically businesses, which are often locally owned and support many local families. I also know well the resources spent by law enforcement agencies responding to break-ins of commercial buildings and investigating the crimes committed.

After retiring as the chief, I remained with the city as a policy advisor to the city manager and worked as the chief policy advisor for a short period of time. During that time the city updated our own land use code to allow for battery charged fence security systems in more of our commercial and industrial zones. In doing so, I believe we have provided our local businesses with the opportunity to safely secure their livelihoods, especially during a time where so many are concerned about being able to do so. To date, we have faced no negative blow back in doing this and I expect several businesses to benefit from the update to our code as well. Additionally, from my experience in law enforcement, I believe allowing citizens to secure their commercial buildings provides for a more secure, immediate area surrounding the property, due to it no longer being an attractive option for potential criminal activity, thus taking away a reason for those seeking to commit crimes from coming into the area.

As the Mayor of a city, I am sensitive to the issue of the state "pre-empting" cities when it comes to land use, in particular. However, I would point out that the proposed bill mirrors what was created in Medford and I believe other cities in Oregon have adopted similar codes. As a result, I view the bill as one that while it may not be technically sponsored by cities, it is born from the decisions cities have made. Therefore, I believe it would result in a law that is beneficial for cities and communities across Oregon, by allowing for local business owners to secure their livelihoods in the same manner as the citizens of Medford.

Sincerely,

Randy Sparacino
City of Medford, Mayor