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Chair Taylor and Members of the Senate Committee on Labor and Business,

I urge you to vote No on SB 850. This bill will cause significant cost increases for publicly funded infrastructure improvements at a time when the State also expects cities to expand infrastructure to support the construction of more housing, especially more affordable housing.

Lebanon is a mostly rural town of about 20,000 people, with over 25% of our population identified as significantly rent burdened. We already have high utility bills for customers due to paying the costs for a new water treatment plant and improvements required to meet wastewater regulations. Raising user fees even higher to cover the required costs outlined in SB 850 is simply not feasible for a low-income community. In addition, we have challenges with getting more than one or two bids for projects based on the lack of contractors available. SB 850 will not help this situation.

Finally, the -2 amendments that include terms such as "offer health care and retirement benefits without cost to employees. . ." is ludicrous for an organization to require of a contractor when we cannot afford to offer that level of coverage to our own employees.

Please vote NO.

Sincerely,

Nancy Brewer  
City Manager