

Submitter: Tonia Moro
On Behalf Of: Self
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure: HB3382

Co Chair McClain, Co Chair Frederick, and Committee members,

I have been an attorney based in Southern Oregon for over 30 years, with experience in Oregon's land use system. These are my comments, my individual comments as a life-long, active, Oregon-land-use-loving Democrat.

As you know, Oregon's land use system empowers communities to envision development within the framework of statewide goals. A democratic process is its core value. A community's vision is enacted by a legislative planning process where they apply the statewide goals and balance those interests. This bill cuts that out and is designed to override that community planning.

In doing so it will further damage our land use system, and do so during its 50th anniversary, no less. What a shame.

No longer will water dependent industries need to demonstrate to the community that their project is needed, that the project will have substantial public benefit or that it will not interfere with public trust rights. All that is out the window for the community to decide in the first instance as you give carte-blanc to the Port of Coos Bay to blast its bedrock and doom its vital species. For many years it has funded its way to become a bigger fish in the pond of ports.

And that is the end-goal. It always has been. Everything else has been an illusion. This bill has never realistically been about a container project. The developer proponent knows it will not obtain that DOT Mega grant that they said this bill was needed to secure. They know that there is no justification/economic case for a container terminal; just pie in the sky. The League of Women Voters have made the case against a container project and so does the written testimony of Bob Morrow, a former project manager for the stevedore company Ports America.

It has all been an illusion. And so too the entire concept that a "internationally competitive" port is Coos Bay's solution. In fact, it is that very old money-black-hole concept that is Coos Bay's problem. It is the impetus for the political victimization of Coos Bay that has caused it's economic woes. Do not support this chicanery; do not associate yourselves with this corruption of Oregon's land use process.

From outside of Salem, this is what this corrupted land-use process has looked like - a new path for developers, one that gets wider every legislative session. Concerned

about local opposition, a developer need only travel the path to Salem to get a different decision-maker; in Salem, the term “jobs” will drown out all other speech, especially if said often. And, in my opinion this newfangled technique of Oregon Land Use Planning, can be most effective for an out of state developer eager to help the Port, when it can engage a former legislator turned investor to hijack the authority and credibility of our supposed-to-be-neutral state agencies to design its bill.

What is a Coos Bay city councilor to think about those state agencies work on this bill? They are the same agencies that have a coordinated role in legislating the plan for the Coos Bay Estuary? Have they not supplanted the authority of the local governments, the ones no one bothered to ask? What a shame.

This is not the time to exclude those Oregon communities; they have recently been promised a new legislative visioning process after 40 years. This is not the time to convince yourselves that you know what those communities need.

As we face immense change and climate impacts, we need to foster a sense of community through engagement around these important resources. We should not ignore and dismiss the community. Fostering community and allowing them to be their decision-makers is the Way, not this.

Please do the right thing. Reject this bill.

Tonia Moro