

Submitter: Patty Dorroh
On Behalf Of: The People of Harney County, OR
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary
Measure: -4 Amendment for SB 1576

Chair, Vice Chair and members of the committee,

My name is Patty Dorroh, Harney County Commissioner. I am submitting testimony in support of -4 Amendment for SB 1576.

Harney County is governed locally by a County Court form of county government. Our County Court, through our County Judge, is vested with probate jurisdiction, although probate cases can be transferred from our County Judge to our Circuit Court on a case-by-case basis.

In statute and over the years, thirty out of thirty-six Oregon counties have transferred and vested probate jurisdiction to the Circuit Court of their counties. Six counties are specifically named in statute (ORS Chapter 111.055) as being prohibited from transferring probate jurisdiction, authority, powers, functions and duties to the Circuit Court.

These six counties - Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Sherman and Wheeler - are statutorily vested with probate jurisdiction without the option to transfer the jurisdiction to Circuit Court. This limits the options for these counties to be able to pursue appropriate changes in our local form of government if and when our people desire change.

Please amend the statutory language to enable the six counties mentioned to have a process to transfer probate jurisdiction to their Circuit Court if and when they choose to do so. The -4 Amendment for SB 1576 does this and I urge your support.

Thank you