

Submitter: Jullie Mikkalo
On Behalf of:
Committee: Senate Committee on Judiciary
Measure: SB1576 ammendment -4

Senate Judiciary Committee
Oregon State Legislature
State Capitol
Salem Oregon

Senator Floyd Prozanski, Chair
Senator Kim Thatcher, Vice-Chair
Senators Sara Gelser Blouin, Dennis Linthicum and James Manning

In just the last few days it has come to many Gilliam County residents attention that we are about to lose rights as citizens of this county; mainly the right to vote on how our county government is structured, (as our judge and commissioners have made it quite clear that they can do this without the peoples consent).

The proposed amendment to senate SB 1576 identified as -4 (LC 228) gives the County Court of Gilliam the authority to approve a transfer of probate jurisdiction, authority, powers, functions and duties of the county court to the circuit courts and set an effective date of the transfer. This is too much power for three individuals, if a change to county government is to take place, it should be a vote of the people, not an authoritarian decision by three people.

Due to recent decisions by the Gilliam County Court, the court meetings are now very well attended and the public outcry is why can't the citizens make the decision; why should this descion be left up to 3 individuals?

This amendent -4 (LC 228) appears to have been added to your bill after our last county court meeting. There was no discussion by the Gilliam County Court about this amendment being brought before the Judiciary Committee at the three meetings I have attended, whether in person or via zoom.

Why is this an emergency? Please remove -4 (LC 228) from the bill and slow this down. We are in the midst of an election year and this has all come to light after the filing for the County Judge and 1 County Commissioner position.

If you do not remove this clause from the bill, please amend it to say that if the counties of Gilliam, Wheeler, Sherman, Harney, Grant and Malhuer want to change their government structure, it has to be through a vote of the people. Giving the power to restructure our government to only three individuals, the Judge and two elected commissioners is an abuse of power. The citizens of Gilliam County have requested to vote on this issue, and our elected officials are refusing to listen to us.

Respectfully submitted,

Jullie Mikkalo, a voting resident of Gilliam County Oregon