



930 Chemawa Road NE
Keizer Oregon 97307
February 12, 2024

Chair Fahey, Vice Chairs Helfrich and Kropf, Members of the House Committee on Rules

I am here to oppose HJR 201 / HB 4075 which would create a new statewide property tax for public safety that would have a state-run means to re-distribute those funds.

The City of Keizer has the same problem with the consequences of Measures 5 and 50 property tax limitations as many cities across Oregon. At our fixed rate of \$2.08/\$1000, we have the lowest permanent tax rate for a full service city in Oregon. Funding public safety personnel and services continues to be the top priority of our residents, as evidenced in every survey or public outreach process for nearly two decades. In response to the need to have sustainable, local and reliable funding for our police, the Keizer City Council instituted a Police Fee on the Keizer Services Bill that pays for five of our positions.

Creating a state-run property tax overlay will not, however, address the underlying cause of the funding disparity created by Measures 5 and 50. Nor will it work within the Home Rule Charters of many cities across Oregon, including Keizer. In addition, the complexities of compression, property tax abatements, exemptions and incentives, local levies, and property taxes that vary wildly even within neighborhoods are not compatible with an overarching statewide program. Finally, the proposal to use some property tax funds for state administration and services takes a funding stream that cities rely on for basic services out of our communities. Local residents struggling to make house payments will see payments rise with no clear increase in public safety services in their own communities.

I appreciate the start of a discussion regarding the negative consequences of Measures 5 and 50. I encourage the Legislature to work with us as cities to ensure that solutions to meet public safety needs will be created in coordination with cities that keeps property taxes in control and purview of local governments and are effective in correcting the problems that have been growing in magnitude over the last 3 decades.

The City of Keizer urges the Committee to not move forward with HJR201/HB4075.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cathy Clark".

Cathy Clark, Mayor, City of Keizer