

With so much discussion in society surrounding voting rights and oppression it is ironic in the recently proposed Oregon HB 4206-1 seeks in part to block referendums (voting) on land use issues both retroactively and in the future specifically related in this case North Plains UGB fight where a vote is set for May 2024. Legislators say this is a loop hole that would cause further complications to an already complicated land use process and was never the intent from SB 100 back in the 1970s. It is a shame the democratic process and voting ability of citizens is being stymied this way and would be interesting to see how the people of North Plains would vote on the proposed UGB expansion and if this something the CITIZENS actually wanted or not. Everyone is fully aware city government and big data centers and business want this and it is to their benefit. Looking through the pages of testimony on HB 4206-1 there was numerous entries of opposition just as there was intense opposition during the North Plains proposed expansion process in addition to supporters in both cases. I would further argue that the legislature, city, county, and state government are more than happy to find and vote on their own loop holes to supersede the land use laws through their own legislation. Special legislation such as SB 1537 would allow cities to by-pass state land use law if passed, SB 4 which passed in 2023 allows governor Kotek to designate up to eight five-hundred-acre sites for industrial use and a score of other local ordinances recently passed throughout the state contribute to this despite the fact there were pages of citizen opposed testimony. I would love to know how these pieces of legislation were part of the existing land use laws in place and in the original intent of SB100. People were told they would be allowed to plan for the next 50 years when the UGB boundaries were set in 2014 for the Metro area. Citizens were allowed a say but not a vote in these legislative bills that passed. Now when citizens attempt to vote that is a loophole. In King City voters spoke and recalled 4 city councilors which sent a powerful message over land use issues. With UGB expansion comes more taxes, revenue sources, construction and benefits that are desired by some but certainly not all. I will remember this next time I vote, if I am allowed to.

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