

## **Written Testimony in Support of HB 3499**

To the Members of the Oregon Legislature,

I am writing in support of House Bill 3499. This bill represents an important step toward ensuring the voices of the voters are heard and respected - especially when it comes to vitally important issues directly affecting their localities. As a citizen and active member of my community, I believe it is crucial that we focus on protecting the will of the voters when community-altering decisions are being made, such as creating an urban renewal plan.

Voters, especially in local elections, make informed decisions that reflect their needs and values. Recent actions in Wilsonville clearly illustrate this point. During the May 2024 election, voters in Wilsonville were asked to weigh-in on an advisory opinion on creating an Urban Renewal district related to downtown Wilsonville. The people of Wilsonville said “No” we don’t want to create an urban renewal district for this proposed project. Unfortunately, some influential voices in the city - including the Mayor - are still pushing to use Urban Renewal to fund this project, despite the will of the voters. Instead of disregarding or attempting to nullify their choices, we should be committed to respecting those votes and fostering an environment of civic engagement where every citizen’s voice is valued.

This bill supports the notion that elected officials should act in good faith and honor the electoral process. It encourages confidence in the fairness and legitimacy of our elections, ensuring that our community members, who invest time and energy into making informed decisions, can trust that their votes will count and be heard on important issues.

The passage of HB 3499 would also send a clear message that Oregon is a state that respects the will of its citizens and stands firm in upholding the values of democracy. It would empower communities across the state to feel confident that their elected leaders are committed to representing their voices, not questioning or undermining them.

I urge you to support HB 3499.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and your commitment to upholding the principles that make Oregon a beacon of democratic values.

Sincerely,

Rob Candrian