

Submitter: Mary Rooney
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3499

I strongly oppose HB 3499.

Due to measures 5 and 50 passed in the 90s, urban renewal is one of the only financing tools that cities have for redevelopment and improvement projects.

Wilsonville has a history of demonstrating conscientious stewardship when using this tool, which is not a one size fits all mechanism. The projects in urban renewal districts have increased the city's tax base while attracting major business to our industrial districts. Projects in Wilsonville funded through urban renewal include land assembly, infrastructure, as well as public amenities such as streets, utility lines, lighting, public open spaces, and parks. Some of these projects are critical whereas others beautify and add to the quality of life in Wilsonville, making this city an exceptional place to live. Urban renewal has benefited Wilsonville residents many times over.

California's use of urban renewal and subsequent outlawing of the mechanism is often cited by those opposed to it. California demonstrated that too many urban renewal districts in play at one time in a context of looser definitions and expansive districts can negatively impact funding for essential services. The elected officials in Wilsonville have a solid history of using this tool much more judiciously, with input from a volunteer urban renewal task force.

Please do not let this nuanced funding mechanism go to a vote. Doing so would undoubtedly subject complicated and nuanced information to a misinformation campaign.

Vice Chair Drazen, please do not dismiss revitalization efforts in Canby through the use of urban renewal funding. I live in Wilsonville and have been visiting Canby- and bringing my dollars, too- because I've noticed the aesthetics in your city have improved.

Thank you for your consideration,

Mary Rooney
Wilsonville