



Hood River County Community Development

Planning, Building Codes, Code Compliance, Economic Development & Veterans' Services

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TO: Chair, Representative Paul Holvey
Members of the Business and Labor Committee

FROM: John Roberts 
Community Development Director

RE: HB 3186

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 3186. The changes originate primarily from an Outdoor Mass Gathering ("OMG") held in Wasco County the last four consecutive years. While serving in the capacity of planning director for Wasco County I had an intimate knowledge of this OMG and was responsible for the permitting process.

In light of working with multiple OMG applications and subsequently having a sound understanding of the permitting process, I am in strong support of HB 3186 and firmly believe the proposed changes are merited. From my perspective as a planning director, HB 3186 would:

- Not take away authority from local governments to review and approve OMGs.
- Clarify the OMG permitting process is not a venue for addressing land use questions and decisions.
- Update some statutory OMG provisions that are outdated.
- Recognize modern technology, electronic and social media.

Furthermore, I do not believe there needs to be concerns with the ability for applicants or event-sponsors to be able to promote OMGs year-round. While working in Wasco County we were able to use social media effectively to shut down an unpermitted OMG within a day and just weeks before the event. Finally, I do not see HB 3186 as an avenue to allow for more permanent development or infrastructure to be developed on a property. The HB would recognize permanent development may occur on a property if allowed outright or receives proper approval through a local jurisdiction's land use code.

If committee members have questions about this testimony or would like more information, please contact me at 541.387.6868, or john.roberts@co.hood-river.or.us.