



Testimony to the House Committee on Water and Land
Friday, February 8, 2013
8:30 am.
State Capital - Conference Room 325

RE: HOUSE BILL 480, RELATING TO LAND USE

Dear Chair Evans and Vice Chair Lowen, and members of the Committee:

I am Christine H.H. Camp, President and CEO of Avalon Development Group, a locally owned small business employing 15 people. I am writing to strongly oppose H.B. No. 480 which proposes to assess a surcharge on any land that is reclassified. The surcharge will be equal to the increase in assessed value of the land resulting from the reclassification.

Properties are generally up-zoned to allow for more efficient use of the property or to be consistent with a community's changing needs. A property can only be up-zoned if the resulting zoning is consistent with State land use, County General Plans or other government mandated uses. Therefore, a property owner is only up-zoning a property to what the State or County had already planned for the property in the first place.

This Bill penalizes property owners who "up-zone" their property to a use that has already been approved by the State or County.

The Bill also does not state the public purpose served by assessing a surcharge - aside from generating additional revenue. Measures already exists to make owners bear the cost of any use or development of their property such as impact fees, connection charges, park dedication fees, affordable housing fees and special district assessments. Furthermore, the more efficient use (through increased densities or property uses) of an up-zoned property results in increased property tax revenues because of the increased assessed values. Such tax revenues can generally be expected to only escalate over time.

As a result, Avalon Development Groups request that this Bill be held in committee.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to express our views on this matter.

Sincerely

Christine Camp
Avalon Development Group