

Bob Main opposes giving power to the people

Commissioner Bob Main perfectly demonstrates some of the difficulties contained within a representative democracy. Main, as reported in The World report [“Ballot tactics target LNG plan”](#) says he will not defend, if necessary, a democratically enacted local ordinance, namely Measure 6-162. The Coos County Right to a Sustainable Energy Future Ordinance “doesn’t appear like it would pass a legal test” states Main. (Ironic that Main, who actively collected signatures to qualify a local ordinance supposedly to defend the 2nd Amendment and in direct defiance of perceived federal overreach is suddenly concerned about constitutionality.) The ordinance, according to Main, would be hard to defend.

“It may put the county in the position to defend it, which for me, and I can’t speak for the other two commissioners, but I would go ‘O.K. the plaintiff wins’,” said Main. “I mean I can’t defend this thing and I don’t want to spend a lot of money on it.”

Main has my contact information and could have discussed his concerns with me or my fellow petitioner, Pattie Gouveia. For that matter, he might have actually read the initiative before going on the radio or giving interviews. If he had [read it](#) he would have seen that under “Enforcement” any resident may enforce the rights and prohibitions through an action in any court possessing jurisdiction within Coos County with or without the County. In fact, should the County violate the ordinance, residents also called “plaintiffs” could bring suit for each violation against the commissioners or “defendants.” So yeah, I would agree, “plaintiff wins.”

Main also claimed that the language in the ordinance is too broad.

“‘Non-sustainable energy systems,’” he said. “What does that mean? Like it’s wide open; I mean the sun is going to extinguish someday.”

Admittedly, the ordinance is a whopping four and a half pages but if Main had read the section “Definitions” he would see that “non-sustainable energy systems” are very clearly defined.

“Non-sustainable energy systems” means those systems that are controlled by state and federal energy policies, rather than community controlled energy policies; hydroelectric power and industrial scale wind power when it is not locally or municipally owned and operated; energy systems using fossil fuels, including but not limited to coal, natural gas, petroleum products, nuclear and radioactive materials and other fuel sources that are non-renewable, or which produce toxins and substances that cause injury to humans or natural communities and ecosystems, or that are in violation of resident’s right to a sustainable energy future. The phrase shall also include any energy system which violates the rights secured under this Ordinance or under other laws. The term shall not include the combustion of wood or wood products, propane, kerosene, heating oil, coal, or natural gas when those fuels is used solely to generate on-site heat or power and the energy produced is not commercially sold, transmitted, or distributed.

So between now and when the sun finally swallows our planet in its final death throes when it will not matter anyway, the ordinance secures our right to be decision makers in our own community.

All residents in Coos County possess a right to a sustainable energy future, and the people of Coos County have the right to adopt laws and policies to secure that right. That right shall include the authority to require the development,

production, and use of sustainable energy.

To be clear, direct democracy is a tool for citizens specifically to work an end run around our elected representatives when legislators cower to corporate privilege and refuse to defend the rights of a community. Main's pet 2nd amendment ordinance was enacted for precisely that purpose as is Measure 6-162. The latter actually empowers our commissioners to standup to state and federal preemption whereas Main's ordinance probably does not.



Natural gas infrastructure

Also worth noting in the article is Jordan Cove spokesman, Michael Hinrichs' confirmation that Veresen views Coos County as just another resource colony.

"We think that it would have negative consequences toward the resource industry in the county," Hinrichs said. "It certainly goes against the spirit and intents of Jordan Cove."