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Subject: Opposition to draft bylaw 4710
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URGENT — SUBMISSION TO THE CVRD BOARD

Re: Immediate Hold — Bylaw No. 4710

March 28, 2026

Please Pause This Bylaw

We are asking the CVRD Board to put an immediate hold on Bylaw No. 4710.

This bylaw is not a small update—it is a major change that affects how thousands of people live on their land. Before moving forward, we are asking you to:

- Stop the process for now
- Get an independent legal review
- Be open with the public about the concerns
- Let residents vote on it through a referendum

This decision is simply too big to move ahead without taking a step back.

This Isn't Just Policy — It's People's Lives

This bylaw may look like paperwork, but it has very real impacts on real people.

In the Cowichan Valley, many people live on rural land because it gives them freedom, flexibility, and a more affordable way of life. This bylaw takes a one-size-fits-all approach that doesn't reflect that reality.

Here are just a few examples of what it could mean:

- Someone with a few project vehicles on their property could suddenly face huge fines
- Families who have sold extra produce for years may no longer be allowed to
- Seniors may not be able to rebuild or improve homes on land they've owned their whole lives
- People living in trailers or RVs on their own land could be treated like they're breaking the law
- Housing for vulnerable people could be pushed out of communities entirely

These are not rare situations. This is everyday rural life.

It Ignores the Reality of Affordability

Housing is already a struggle for many people.

For some, living in a trailer, RV, or small structure on their own land is the only way they can afford to live here. This bylaw takes that option away.

That doesn't solve a problem—it creates one.

It risks pushing people out of housing altogether, especially those who are already struggling.

The Rules Are Confusing and Unfair

Another major concern is how unclear and uneven the rules are.

- Some definitions are so broad that almost anything could be considered a violation
- Others are so narrow that people lose basic protections
- Important words like “nuisance” or “excessive” aren't clearly defined at all

That leaves too much up to interpretation and makes it hard for people to know what's allowed on their own property.

People shouldn't need a lawyer just to understand how they can live on their land.

It Feels Like Too Much Control

Many parts of this bylaw go far beyond what people expect from local zoning.

It regulates things like:

- What you can do with food you grow
- What kind of home you can live in
- How you use your own land day-to-day

For many landowners, this feels like a loss of independence and control over property they've worked hard for.

This Decision Is Too Big for Just a Board Vote

This bylaw replaces long-standing, community-based zoning rules with one single system across all electoral areas.

That's a huge shift.

Many people feel this process has not fully reflected what residents actually want. When something this big affects so many people, it shouldn't be decided by a small group alone.

Residents deserve a direct say.

Let the People Vote

We are asking the Board to commit to a referendum before moving forward.

If this bylaw truly reflects what the community wants, it will pass.

If it doesn't, that's important to know before it's too late.

In Closing

This bylaw, as it stands:

- Doesn't reflect the realities of rural life
- Makes housing harder, not easier
- Creates confusion and uncertainty
- Takes away flexibility that people rely on
- Lacks clear public support

This isn't about resisting change—it's about getting it right.

Our Request

Please:

1. Pause Bylaw No. 4710 immediately
2. Take the time to review it properly
3. Give residents a real voice through a referendum

People in this region care deeply about their land, their homes, and their way of life. They deserve to be part of a decision this important.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob and Fiona Jones

Residents, Cowichan Station