Regional

Residents of Albany opposed to prison site

Linn County residents held a rally Tuesday at the State Capitol to show their opposition to having a state prison in their

Meanwhile, plans for a Nov. advisory election in Linn County on the proposed site have been scrubbed because a state siting panel is refusing to delay its choice for a public

A 380-acre site south of Albany is one of four finalists for a new prison that eventually could house up to 3,000 inmates. The other sites are at Boardman, and one is at Ontar-

At Tuesday's rally, speakers said the proposed Albany prison would take valuable farm land out of production and hurt the quality of life in the area.

"I think the message is clear that we don't want any more Salem-mid-Willamette Valley prisons," said state Rep. Carolyn Oakley, R-Albany. ready have our share.

Oakley and others presented petitions to Gregg Kantor, communications director for Gov. Neil Goldschmidt, with the signatures of 9,000 people who oppose the Albany site.

Linn County commissioners last week asked Goldschmidt to stop or delay the siting process so a referendum could be held on the proposed Albany site.

Goldschmidt told the Linn County Commissioners Monday, however, that he would not slow the siting process to allow for a local vote.

"Our prison needs are urgent, and I believe the process now under way must be brought to its conclusion." the governor said.

A siting committee is to hold its final hearing Thursday evening, in Albany, and then meet Friday in Salem to consider a decision on which two sites to recommend to Goldschmidt for a final decision.

At that point Goldschmidt will have 15 days to choose a

Mark Cushing of Portland chairman of the siting panel. said the selection process would proceed on schedule because the siting law passed by the Legislature doesn't allow for public votes on locations.

Cushing said lawmakers specifically rejected a provision that would have made final approval of sites contingent on voter approval.

The siting process gives local residents "more than ample means" to express their views, Cushing said. He said his law office has received hundreds of letters from prison opponents in Albany.

Plans are to have the first 500-bed phase of the prison operating by mid-1991





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