

HB 2914 – Please let property owners have a voice

Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources:

I am writing in favor of HB 2914. As one of the home owners in Subarea A, a rural residential community, this bill will put the decision making back into the hands of the local government. Due to the passage of HB 4078 our land was not only brought into the Urban Growth boundary, which was not requested, nor desired, by our neighborhood, a designation of “employment land” was attached. The interpretation of this designation by the City of Hillsboro is that their hands are tied do to state law and they have no choice but to designate our land as industrial. Sub-area A consists of roughly 200 acres and approximately 49 different parcels, with an average lot size of 4 acres. It has been proven that fragmented acres, such as ours, is not desirable to industry. It is too complicated for industry, and next to impossible, to have a great number of individual owners come together in an agreement to sell to make the lot large enough to fit industry needs. Fragmented acreage does not work for industrial zoning. Having this designation would in theory show more industrial acres available for development in the City of Hillsboro, but in reality, only penalizes the land owners, as Subarea A is unsaleable to industry.

I have been a real estate agent for almost 19 years, ranking in the top 1% of Realtors in the state. An industrial designation would immediately devalue our homes by at least 40%, in some cases more. Unlike desired industrial designated land, the value of our property is in our homes, not the land. Industry has no use for our homes, so the value to them would just be the land, at a significant reduction of today’s market value as rural residential - homes on small acreage. Per Oregon Disclosure Law, sellers are required to fill out disclosures as part of a sale. Line 56, in section 1, letter G states:

“Are there any governmental studies, designations, zoning overlays, surveys or notices that will affect the property.”

If we are designated industrial, even if we, as individual owners, decided not to be annexed into the city, our land value immediately decreases. Many of our neighbors have been in their homes for decades, are elderly, and their home is there largest, if not only, asset. If they need to relocate, or move to gain further assistance, much of their nest egg will be taken from them. For almost all Oregonians, they to, have their biggest asset is their home. By requiring our homes be turned into “employment land” you are taking away what all of us have worked so hard to earn. I implore you to thing how you would feel if this was your home, or your parent’s home. What if one day you learned that 40%+ of your largest asset was taken away from you for a designation that not only took away that value, but would not be successful for the purpose it had been changed? This state requirement does both – devalues the land with a designation that will not be successful due to the undesired/unsalability of the small acreage for its state intended use.

Subarea C is large parcels, it is ideal for industrial use. Subarea B, was brought in the UGB in 2008, and was not part of HB4078. We are asking for this state mandated “employment use” to be removed from HB4078 and put the decision back into local hands, with the City of Hillsboro.

I am asking you to please let our voice be heard, and protect our land owner rights, by letting our land use zoning be decided by the city in which we live.

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