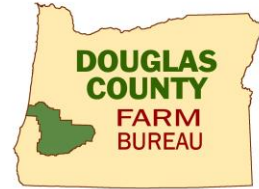


Douglas County Farm Bureau

1545 Azalea Glen Rd

Azalea OR, 9740

dougcofb@gmail.com



To: House Committee On Agriculture and Land Use

Douglas County Farm Bureau is opposed to SB943.

Douglas County Farm Bureau does not oppose the allowance of a parsonage on non-resource lands. Douglas County Farm Bureau opposes a parsonage as an activity of a church on resource land. The impacts from a dwelling on adjacent farm or forest land are much greater than the impacts from the other activities currently included such as worship services, religion classes, weddings, or funerals. A parsonage is not an activity, but a new use.

Douglas County Farm Bureau concurs with the Oregon Farm Bureau policy that opposes the establishment of more nonfarm dwellings in EFU zones (Policy 3.550) and opposes the inclusion of any new nonfarm uses on lands zoned for EFU uses (Policy 3.670).

The proposed SB943 wording, "to the extent practicable, is not sited on high value farmland...." is not an enforceable inclusion and does not protect high value farmland.

Changes to add a parsonage under the current ORS 215.441 with limitations to size and location could trigger actions under the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA) if the additions are not equal to those provided for a non-religious nonfarm dwelling. It would be prudent to seek a legal opinion from an unbiased source such as the Attorney General before considering changes to ORS 215.441.

Churches currently have the option to place a parsonage on EFU lands by applying for a dwelling not in conjunction with a farm use or an exception to Goal 3. If the committee feels it must take action on SB943, Douglas County asks that SB943 include the addition of language from ORS 215.284 and/or ORS 660-033-0130 relating to a dwelling not in conjunction with farm use to ensure some protection to resource lands.

Douglas County Farm Bureau understands that there is pending litigation at LUBA on this issue and urges you to let this matter work through the legal system before taking any action.

Douglas County Farm Bureau urges you to not move this bill forward.

Douglas County Farm Bureau represents 290 voting and supporting member families whose livelihoods depend on protecting working farmland.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Matthew Brady

Douglas County Farm Bureau President