

From the Desk of
Senator Michael
Dembrow



Vote NO on SB 16

SB 16 HAS BEEN DECLARED A "MAJOR THREAT"

BY THE OREGON CONSERVATION NETWORK.

SB 16 would waive Oregon's land use laws and allow up to 100 new houses — not related to farming — to be scattered across 200 acres of exclusive farm use (EFU) lands in the large "eastern Oregon border region". Below are a few reasons why SB 16 should be opposed:

- Potentially adding many new homes for those not in farming or ranching in the midst of working lands causes many conflicts with farming.
- Agriculture is the economic engine of this region: **Malheur County is among the top beef and dairy producing regions in the country.** Farming and ranching is Malheur County's largest jobs provider, generating over \$350 million annually in agriculture sales.
- **The results of SB 16 would take investment away from Ontario, which has land available for residential development.** Rural communities need investment now more than ever.
- The state has recently invested in a major rail reload shipping facility in Nyssa, designed to increase the options available for Malheur County's ranchers and farmers to get their products to market quickly. This is not a time to be taking farmland out of production.
- Scattered housing development can interfere with wildlife and water resources and increases the risk of wildfire in an area already rated as high for wildfire risk.
- SB 16 is based on the flawed notion that if higher-end homes are allowed scattered on farmland, it will spur economic growth in the region. **It seems likely these will end up as second homes, causing home prices overall to increase for those of middle- and low-incomes.**