

Please Oppose HB 2708

Friends of Yamhill County strongly opposes HB 2708. It perpetuates the false notion that just adding more land means houses will be more affordable. Building outside existing public services adds development costs that drive the price of housing beyond the range of middle, much less affordable housing. Families thrive when they are in communities with schools, libraries, groceries, walkable neighborhoods, and the other elements at the core of UGBs.

This concept was passed as a pilot project a few sessions ago. The fact that the two communities that applied are in the early stages of the projects should be noted for two particular reasons. First, this is not a simple or quick fix. Secondly, more time is needed to gather data and learn the lessons from the pilot program.

On a more personal note, as the fourth generation on a farm established in 1891, the practice of referring to farm and forest land as vacant shows a nearly willful disregard for two of Oregon's largest industries – agriculture and forestry. The pandemic has decimated businesses like tourism and hospitality but fields, forests, orchards, and the like grow on.

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