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**Senate Committee on Energy & Environment
OFB Testimony on SB 16**

February 9, 2021

Chair Beyer and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today on SB 16. By way of background, the Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) is the state's largest agricultural trade association, representing nearly 7,000 farm and ranch families from across the state.

OFB strongly supports Oregon's land use planning system, including Goal 3 and the preservation of agricultural lands for productive farm use. At the same time, OFB also recognizes the demand for effective solutions to our housing crisis, and the need to support economic development, especially in Eastern Oregon. With this in mind, OFB expressed concerns about this concept last session, and opposed the bill because of potential conflicts with non-farm uses, without express protection for working agricultural operations in the area.

This session, OFB is neutral on SB 16, as proponents of the bill have earnestly worked to address our concerns regarding farmland protection. Among other protections, the bill includes limitations on rezoning high-value, Class I, II, or III soils, and lands viable for reasonably obtaining a profit through a farm use, a key requirement that rezoning will not force a significant change in accepted farm practices, and a deed restriction in favor of agricultural landowners. OFB appreciates proponents listening to the concerns of the local farming community, and drafting clear and objective protections for agricultural businesses in the impacted area.

For these reasons, OFB is neutral on SB 16. Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments today. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

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