



Locally Grown
and
GROWING STRONG

**House Committee on Rules
OFB Opposition Testimony on HB 2486**

Chair Smith Warner, Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today on HB 2486. By way of background, the Oregon Farm Bureau is Oregon's largest agricultural trade association, representing nearly 7,000 farm and ranch families across the state. While we understand and appreciate the legislature's desire to increase transparency in emergency situations, we have substantial concerns about HB 2486 as written.

OFB is fundamentally opposed to regulations that may substantially erode private property rights. We believe that regulations should be applied to private property in the least restrictive manner possible and that the state should maximize incentives and cooperative programs in accomplishing statewide policies. Moreover, we do not support government entities or the general public entering private property without permission from private landowners. While we recognize that the vast majority of citizens are responsible people who recognize and respect rights of others, there is still a need to protect private property and prevent trespass. Agricultural operations can be loud, include abrasive smells, and contain heavy pieces of machinery, equipment, and disturbed terrain. Landowners can be subject to loss of time and considerable liability if a guest or trespasser is injured on private property.

For these reasons, and for the general privacy rights of our membership, OFB is opposed to HB 2486 as written because it would require a public body to grant access to public or private lands to the media during emergency situations. This includes even scenarios far outside of situations where there may be a continued risk to the general public where news coverage is important to protect the health and safety of the community. Again, while we appreciate the need for greater transparency for the public during emergency situations, the provisions of this bill go too far and would substantially infringe upon fundamental private property rights of Oregon landowners.

Therefore, we urge the Committee to amend the bill to protect a landowner's ability to exclude the general public from their property and to only make this a mandatory requirement on publicly owned lands. Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

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