

Opposition to SB16

I am very concerned about Senate Bill 16 for the following reasons.

I believe that buildings in towns and cities more than anything else is the primary cause of global warming. Anytime you build housing and/or buildings regardless of how distant they may be, they change the weather patterns in the areas around them. These changes may take place nearby or far away. Anyone can feel the heat in a small town or city and also feel the more tolerable lower temperatures in the countryside and forests. But new housing in new areas always have an after affect. One house brings another, and several houses bring new asphalt roads which brings more traffic, which pollutes the atmosphere and brings rising temperatures and additional changes to the climate. Remember that fires burn across open grasslands just as destructively as they do in forests. More people, more buildings, higher temperatures, water shortages, drier country, more frequent fires, less farmland, less food production. It isn't inconceivable to picture our state, our country looking like many South American countries, with many people living on the outskirts of cities in complete squalor. Our homeless population is similar to what is seen in other countries.

Of all the industries in any country or state or region, the most important is agriculture and farming. Without this nothing else can function. Farmland and agriculture should be protected by our state government, our county government, and our city government. If you can't feed yourself, you have a problem. You can't expect someone else to feed you. Someone else has there own people to feed. Depending on an outside source for your food supply leaves you very vulnerable. Our land use laws were created for this very purpose—to make sure that farming is not threatened by the growth of nonproductive activity and basically destructive activity.

Any housing development in Oregon needs to take place in already established residential areas and towns such as Ontario, Baker City, or LaGrande or the little towns in between.

What I think would be helpful is to have a government agency that can help farmers who wish to transition out of farming to be able to transfer their farm land to a new generation of farmers and help retirees have a secure living arrangement in retirement. At the same time, new farmers need to have a help system to help ensure their success.

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