

## **SB 70 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**

### **Senate Committee On Natural Resources**

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**Prepared By:** Laura Kentnesse, LPRO Analyst

**Meeting Dates:** 2/8, 4/3

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#### **WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Amends the statutory reference for the definition of 'high-value farmland' for residential rezoning of lands within Eastern Oregon Border Economic Development Region.

*FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued*

*REVENUE: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued*

#### **ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

##### **EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:**

-1 Replaces the measure. Changes county authority to "partition" to county authority to "divide" lands zoned for exclusive farm use within the Eastern Oregon Border Economic Development Region (Region) provided that certain conditions are met. Amends the statutory reference for the definition of 'high-value farmland' for residential rezoning of lands within the Region by excluding certain high-value farmlands. Requires that the rezoned lands are within a rural fire protection district, comply with applicable fire prevention codes, and are not within an area designated as a 100-year floodplain on a current Federal Emergency Management Agency map.

*FISCAL: No fiscal impact*

*REVENUE: No revenue impact*

##### **BACKGROUND:**

In 2017, the Legislative Assembly created the Eastern Oregon Border Economic Development Region (Border Region) and established the Eastern Oregon Border Economic Development Board (Board) through the enactment of House Bill 2012. The Border Region is defined in rule as the area within 20 miles of the Oregon border with Idaho, which includes the cities of Ontario, Vale, and Nyssa. The Board is charged with recommending policies and strategies to the Legislative Assembly for promoting workforce and economic growth in the Border Region. The Board is also tasked with identifying specific laws, rules, and regulations that place workforce or economic development efforts in the Border Region at a competitive disadvantage compared to similar efforts in the border region of Idaho.

In 2021, the Board urged the legislature to pass Senate Bill 16 as a means to increase rural residential housing options in the Border Region in response to significant residential growth in Idaho. The Legislative Assembly enacted the bill, which authorizes counties to partition and rezone up to 200 acres of lands within the Border Region from exclusive farm use to residential use, provided that the rezoned lands are not high-value farmland and other specified requirements are met.

Senate Bill 70 would amend the statutory reference for the definition of 'high-value farmland' for residential rezoning of lands within Eastern Oregon Border Economic Development Region.