

Submitter: Sheila Dooley

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB70

February 7, 2023

Dear Senate Committee on Natural Resources,

Please oppose Senate Bill 70 for the following reasons:

1. SB 70 violates ORS 215.243 (2) of Agricultural Land Use Policy as it does not preserve large blocks of agricultural land but instead results in more fragmentation and spot zoning.

“ORS.215.243 (2) The preservation of a maximum amount of the limited supply of agricultural land is necessary to the conservation of the state’s economic resources and the preservation of such lands in large blocks is necessary in maintaining the agricultural economy of the state...”

2. SB 16 was presented as a “one time exception” to Oregon’s Land Use Laws that affected approximately 200 acres and would allow up to 100 homes on 2 acre lots of non-viable (Class IV-VIII soils) (Senator Findley’s letter to the legislature dated March 31, 2021). Now there is an attempt with SB 70 to change this to a narrow definition of high-value farmland. This is nothing more than an attempt to open up more farm land for development after the fact.

3. SB 70 contradicts Senator Findley’s 2021 letter in which he stated that the language of SB 16 had been carefully crafted. (“We have worked extensively with the Oregon Farm bureau and the Malheur County Farm Bureau on crafting language.”)

4. Please leave land use planning to the planning process in place. Involving the Legislature just opened up a can of worms. The bill’s backers wanted you to make an exception for them and now they’re saying they want more. This is the result of bypassing Oregon’s land use system. They should have had to go through a rezone process like everyone else.

When Wasco County made a land use decision that I didn’t agree with, I appealed to LUBA. No one (including elected officials) should be above Oregon’s land use laws, laws which the people of Oregon have upheld at the ballot box again and again.

Please oppose SB 70.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sheila Dooley
Mosier, Oregon