

To: Senate Committee on Natural Resources

From: Aileen Kaye

Date: 2-8-23

Re: “No” on SB 70 Houses on Exclusive Farm Use land

Dear Chair Golden, Vice Chair Girod, and Members of the Committee,

I am here to testify against SB 70. (Sen. Girod, please know I am your constituent.) I am against this bill for the same reasons as all the others who are not in favor of this bill, plus the following:

History: A bill to build houses on EFU land, HB 2456, was sponsored by then Rep. Findley in 2019. Fortunately, it failed. He tried it again as SB 16 in 2021 and unfortunately it passed.

In my opinion this bill goes against the most basic tenets of our land use laws regarding using farm land for farming. I feel it was pushed then by legislative leadership as a trade for a yes vote by the bill sponsor for other bills. Not a good way to make policy.

I have been told that another reason SB 16 passed in 2021 was that the sponsor told his peers that the land in question was “just scrub land”.

Those of us who fought this bill in 2021 did so because it sets a very dangerous precedent by allowing housing developments on farm land. We argued that if we allow this betrayal of our land use laws in this county, how can we deny the same request by another county and then another county.

We told legislators that the land in question was used for agricultural purposes. We argued that water, infrastructure, transportation, etc., would be difficult and nonsensical to get; that there would be conflicts with farming, etc.; that it would not meet the true housing needs of the community.

We warned that this bill puts the camel's nose under the tent. And sure enough, now they are asking for more. **In fact, because some legislators passed SB 16 in 2021 because they were told the land in question was "scrub land", I consider SB 70 to be a bait and switch.**

I hope before you consider your vote this time, you will review Oregon's 19 Planning Goals, quotes by Governor Tom McCall, the report "Death by 1000 Cuts" by 1000 Friends of Oregon, and the six-part series done about Oregon's land use laws for OPB by reporter Jeff Mapes.

I urge a "no" vote. Thank you for your time and consideration.