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February 21, 2023

House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Vote “NO” on HB 2192 - Aligns criteria for alteration, restoration or replacement of a dwellings on lands zoned for forest use consistent with criteria applicable to dwellings on lands zoned for farm use.

To: House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Dear Chair Helm, Vice-Chairs Hartman and Owens, and Members of the Committee:

Friends of Marion County (FoMC) is an independent 501(c)(3) farmland protection organization founded in 1998. Our mission is to protect farm and forestland, parks, and open space.

There are so many reasons the committee should reject this proposal and I will list just a few here.

1. Unlike HB 3024 in Legislative Session 2019, HB 2192 wrongly permits dwellings in the Forest/Timber (FT) zone.
2. HB 2192 is modeled after Session 2019 HB 3024 but unlike the Exclusive Farm Zone (EFU) the Forest /Timber Zone (FT) does not require regular and often multiple annual periods of care, such as tilling, planting, weeding, and harvesting of crops.
3. HB 2192 will permit more housing in the FT zone. The FT zone is already a tinderbox as we have witnessed in the 2019 fires in Marion County. Lives were lost because of the abundance of dwellings in this zone.
4. HB 2192 permits the replacement of dwellings that are long gone. No doubt the benefits of timber harvest income and the difficulty of living in the midst of an FT zone convinced residents to move closer to residential areas. But HB 2192 permits these dwellings to be reconstituted even if only a pile of rotten boards remain.

So, let's not add to the additional burden firefighters face when trying to protect human lives in the midst of a forest.

I hope this letter provides an important view of the proposal and that the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water should reject this measure.

Thank you for listening.

Roger Kaye, President
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