

2-7-24

To whom it may concern,

I would like to express my opposition to including UGB expansion in the SB 1537.

In many ways this is no more than a cheap trick and yet another way to erode the land use laws that this state and its politicians supposedly champion. People were told they could plan for the next 50 years in the last METRO hearings. Will this expansion of 150 or 75 acres happen again the next year and the next and the next? In addition to the 8,500 acres sites that the governor can potentially designate for mass industrial sites like Intel? If so, that will end up being thousands of acres. It is important to remember the state of Oregon also LOST population overall last year and has been on a downward trend. Look through various areas and you will see tons of vacant lots such as in Cornelius or Portland. Why not start by infilling those first? Build up not out. Either we have a land use system or we do not. Which is it?

According to the Washington County Climate Friendly Report “In 2007, Oregon legislators adopted a policy and goal to reduce Oregon’s climate pollution by 75% by 2050. That’s what the science calls for, if we’re going to avoid catastrophic impacts to our environment, communities, and economy.

Fifteen years later, we’re far off track in our efforts to meet those goals – and we’re already experiencing real-world impacts of climate disruption, with increasing wildfires, in size, severity, and timing, and record heat waves that have cost Oregonians their homes, and their lives.

We’re particularly off-track in reducing pollution from transportation, responsible for about 38% of Oregon’s climate pollution. On our current path, Oregon will only reduce transportation pollution by about 20% by 2050. That means we’re polluting far more than we hoped, meaning more extreme weather events, more wildfires, more ocean acidification, and more record heat waves. In response, Governor Brown directed state agencies to promote cleaner vehicles, cleaner fuels, and less driving.”

It seems every city desires to expand, build, pave, and destroy what has existed for decades and centuries around us and has co-existed just fine. Row after row of box houses and square foot yards that cost over half a million dollars is not a better degree of living. With climate change such a large push and such concern it seems a mixed message is being sent. Some deem it okay to pave over pristine farmland and open spaces and take in huge tracts of land that once they are destroyed you will never get back.

I would encourage you to read the Op Ed published in the Pamplin papers in April 2023 entitled: Dangerous Times for Oregon’s Rural Landowners.

https://www.forestgrovenewstimes.com/opinion/guest_opinion/opinion-dangerous-times-for-oregons-rural-landowners/article_b894e202-d4b9-11ed-b199-33ebac29388c.html

Since 2000, According to the American Farmland Trust Oregon has lost nearly 70,000 acres of farmland to development. The report can be found here <https://csp-fut.appspot.com/>

On the contrary, open spaces and crops have proved their benefits to the larger environment and climate change. In a study from Mandan, North Dakota in 2010 by the USDA-ARS Northern Great Plains Research Laboratory 50 acres of no till perennial alfalfa without

fertilizer was left to grow and they found over a six month period the crop removed 1,400 pounds of Carbon Dioxide per acre (See: Alfalfa ‘fabulous’ in removing carbon dioxide from atmosphere by Susan Roesler farm and Ranch Guide <https://www.ars.usda.gov/ARUserFiles/38020/Alfalfa.pdf>).

While some progress is inevitable, it is critical that every citizen and official must remember everything has a cost and at some point, we are all going to have to decide if the benefits outweigh those costs in the in fight against climate change or if Oregon’s unofficial mantra of “keep Oregon green” still applies.

Remove the UGB Expansion from SB 1537. I believe there are better solutions than a temporary fix. Please see the pictures of the farm I live on and want to preserve for decades to come and when I met governor Kotek in September 2023 for the work I did on HB 3464.

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