



February 21, 2025

Chair Pham, Vice Chair Anderson and Committee Members
Senate Committee on Housing and Development

**Re: SB 438 and SB 878
Expanding Development on Rural Farm and Forest Lands**

The Oregon Association of Conservation Districts represents Oregon's 45 Soil and Water Conservation Districts, special districts governed by elected boards. The Districts protect and enhance soil quality, water quality and quantity, and habitat by providing technical services and supporting voluntary conservation in partnership with private landowners and managers, and with federal, state and nonprofit partners.

Protection of farm and forest land under the Department of Land and Conservation Development's longstanding Land Use Goals 3 and 4 is critical to maintaining the agriculture and forestry land base upon which our natural resource-based industries and conservation efforts rely. These lands are critical to Oregon's economy in providing jobs and food and fiber, as well as conservation values.

Both bills allow additional home sitings on rural properties outside the urban growth boundary. There are already seven (7) different land use process options under existing law to allow additional housing on farmland and six (6) options to apply for these additional homes on forest lands. Developing additional housing around farm and forest lands also conflicts with farm and forestry practices.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our concerns. We urge you to vote "no" on both bills.

Oregon Association of Conservation Districts

Jan Lee
Jan Lee, President