

March 5, 2025

Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire
Oregon Legislature

RE: Opposition to SB 78

Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Nash, and Members of the Committee:

Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) is the state's most inclusive agriculture organization, proudly representing over 6500 family farms and ranches that produce more than 220 agricultural commodities. From hops and hazelnuts to cattle, cranberries, and timber with operations spanning from just a few acres to thousands, our members utilize all farming methods including organic, conventional, regenerative, biotech, and even no-tech.

OFB opposes SB 78, which would impose arbitrary size limits on replacement dwellings on land zoned for Exclusive Farm Use (EFU) and forest use. This bill unnecessarily restricts private property rights, undermines local land use control, and adds unjustified regulatory burdens on farm and forest landowners who need to replace their homes.

Oregon's land use system already ensures that replacement dwellings do not disrupt farm or forest operations. This bill adds a rigid, one-size-fits-all size limitation, capping the floor area of replacement homes at 10 percent larger than the original dwelling or a maximum of 2,500 square feet. In the event that a 3,500 square foot home were in need of replacement, the landowner would be limited to a home that is 1,000 square feet smaller.

Farmers and foresters must be able to rebuild homes that meet their families' needs without superfluous bureaucratic interference. Landowners who have lawfully established dwellings should not be forced into unnecessary limitations when rebuilding after a fire, storm, or other event. No compelling public interest justifies this new restriction, and it unfairly penalizes those who live and work on farm and forest land.

Land use planning should remain at the county level, where decisions can be tailored to the unique needs of local communities. Oregon's land use system has always recognized that rural counties understand their landscapes better than a statewide mandate. This bill

takes decision-making away from local governments and imposes a top-down restriction that fails to consider the diversity of Oregon's farms, ranches, and forest lands.

We urge the Legislature to reject this bill and instead support policies that protect rural property rights, strengthen local control, and reduce bureaucratic barriers for Oregon's farm and forest landowners.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ryan J. Krabill', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ryan J. Krabill
Oregon Farm Bureau