

Chair Marsh, Vice-Chair Andersen, Vice-Chair Breese-Iverson, and members of the House Committee on Housing and Homelessness, Thank You for the opportunity to comment on HB 3928. As a farmer, landowner, and lifelong Oregonian, I vehemently oppose this bill.

There is no doubt that we have issues with housing and affordability, but this bill is not the answer. What this bill would allow for would be detrimental to the industries and communities that rely on our working lands. Our land use laws have spent decades protecting this State from the kind of sprawl and irreversible waste this bill would allow for. Our land use laws keep our working lands WORKING in the way they should. What is proposed in this bill does NOT allow for alleviation of the state's housing shortage, is an irresponsible use of our natural resources, and an insult to the history of this land. The kind of developments proposed in this bill incite conflict between agricultural and other working land uses, as well as create strain on rural first responders and other agencies. It disrupts the patterns of ecological systems, puts stress on existing infrastructure, and leads to major community safety issues.

The goal is to strengthen our existing communities and support their responsible growth. This means using land that is already designated within our UGB to meet the needs of our communities through innovation and repurposing. When I drive through urban areas, I see a multitude of poorly used, dilapidated parcels that are ready to be repurposed. We have thousands of vacant acres inside our UGBs that are suitable for housing but simply need an extension of a road or some pipes. This is where we should focus investments and policy changes to provide housing – not on remote, expensive-to-serve lands in and among our agricultural and forest lands.

A vote against this bill is an opportunity to show your support of our natural and working lands, as well as sustainable, responsible urban communities.

Thank you for considering my comments and allowing this opportunity for public input.