

Submitter: Paula Hawes

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3928

I am opposed to HB 3928, which would allow counties to designate an unlimited amount of rural land, outside UGBs, for sprawling residential development.

Opening new expanses of rural lands for residential development would exacerbate the loss of farm and forest land creating unnecessary conflicts to farm and forest operators and further driving up the costs of farmland.

Passage of this bill would result in a loss of precious farm and forest land. There has already been a dramatic loss of wildlife habitat, which impacts elk, deer and numerous other species who rely on rural lands for their survival.

There continues to be a push by State and local governments to develop rural lands, even though an overwhelming majority of residents are against these housing developments. The Thornburgh development is one such example of local government overruling the wishes of the people. In spite of thousands of testimonies opposing the development of yet another water guzzling, luxury housing resort, the Thornburgh project was allowed to go forward by Deschutes County.

Given the recent "Wildfire Zone Re-Mapping" which has resulted in huge increases in property insurance for many rural homeowners, it makes little sense to allow development of rural lands which will only increase fire danger in these areas.

Furthermore, many rural homeowners are increasingly being confronted with wells that are going dry. Adding housing to rural areas that are already facing water shortages is unfair to existing water right holders, who are being forced to drill deeper and deeper wells at considerable cost.

HB 3928 will not solve the shortage of "affordable" housing in Oregon. Growth needs to be concentrated within the urban growth boundaries that have already been established, where services, public transportation, schools and employment opportunities are available.

HB 3928 is misdirected and should be rejected.

Thank you.

Paula Hawes

Deschutes County resident