



OREGON  
AGRICULTURAL  
TRUST

Tuesday, February 10, 2026

**RE: Opposition to SB 1522-1**

Esteemed Chair Pham and members of the Committee,

My name is Nellie McAdams and I am the executive Director of Oregon Agricultural Trust, a statewide 501(c)(3) land trust that helps protect agricultural land, keep it in production, and pass it on to future generations.

I am writing to express our organization's strong opposition to SB 1522-1. The bill would prohibit the consideration of "existing land uses or soil type" in designating the location of an urban reserve. If this bill were passed, it would create massive opportunity costs for neighboring agricultural land, which was never the intent of the urban and rural reserves process.

Agricultural land is essential for Oregon's second largest industrial sector of agriculture, rural livelihoods, food systems, and climate mitigation. Yet cities around the world are located on top of or near some of the world's best agricultural soils. This creates an inherent tension between the spread of urbanization and the surrounding non-renewable natural resource of soil. Yet it's possible to balance these interests.

As policy makers and people who care about the future, our duty to steward the state's resources obliges us to conserve what remains of our agricultural soils. Land use in general is the best tool for making nuanced decisions that balance multiple considerations, from providing an urban land supply to sequestering carbon. Oregon's recent Land-Based Net Carbon Inventory states as its first takeaway: "Continued protection of Oregon's landmark approach to land use should be an important strategy for ensuring the net removal of carbon by its lands." The urban reserve designation process can and should also balance multiple interests, such as mitigating the harms caused to public values outside of the urban growth boundary.

Land use is designed to balance 19 goals to produce a better solution for all, and wise placement of our urban reserves is a relatively light requirement in return for protection of our soils. We ask that the committee reject SB 1522-1 and to allow the continued consideration of agricultural use and our irreplaceable soils when designating urban reserves.

With great respect,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nellie McAdams".

Nellie McAdams  
Executive Director