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Senate Committee on Housing and Development

Submitted via Oregon Legislative Information System (OLIS) testimony portal

Subject: Testimony in Opposition to SB 1578

Chair Pham and Members of the Committee:

I was a State Representative from 2003 to 2009 and then a member for eight years of the Land Conservation and Development Commission. I now live on the Linn County farm that has been in my family for over a century and where I grow hazelnuts.

One part of Senate Bill 1578 would allow counties that have a low population density to add up to 50 acres of new rural residential development outside urban growth boundaries (UGBs) regardless of the productivity of the lands taken for agriculture and timber production. Another part would greatly expand the opportunity for accessory dwelling units (ADUs) on rural lands.

This bill is totally ill-conceived. There is no connection between the new houses it would allow and the natural resource economy of rural Oregon. This state needs additional housing, but it is needed inside UGBs where the residents have access to employment and services. Spreading more people across the landscape from which they must travel for work and shopping will further burden the country roads we farmers depend on to move equipment and product.

Our existing statewide planning goals provide a process for orderly expansion of UGBs where a need for more land can be demonstrated. SB 1578 is an attempt to end-run around that orderly process. Please do not move it forward.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,



Greg Macpherson