



February 12, 2026

To: Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue

From: Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD)

RE: SB 1586, Oppose

Chair Broaman and Members of the Committee:

OACD represents the 45 Soil and Water Conservation Districts statewide, which are special districts with elected boards. The Districts protect and enhance soil and water quality and habitat through voluntary conservation in partnership with rural and urban landowners and managers. The Districts both provide technical assistance and are project implementers. They help landowners translate their conservation goals into practices and projects.

OACD is greatly concerned by SB 1586, a piece of legislation that would turn 1,700 acres of farmland in Rural Reserve to industrial development by bypassing Oregon's land use system. Although this bill is targeted to Washington County, it sets a **precedent for short-cuts around our land use system for special interests, individual communities or elected officials that wish to advance specific projects.**

Oregon's land use system is designed to promote smart growth and economic development while protecting our best agricultural land, forest land, open space and natural resources. However, it does not lock us in place. Urban Reserves have been created to receive future growth and Rural Reserves to protect the high-value agricultural lands that sustain us, and Urban Growth Boundaries are evaluated every 10 years. This system allows economic development to go hand-in-hand with environmental protection through a rigorous and public process.

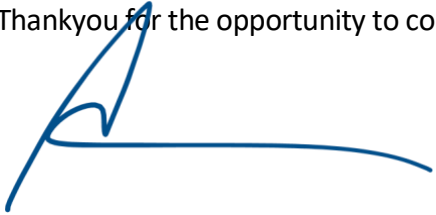
The bill requires Washington County and the city of Hillsboro to amend their respective comprehensive plans to change 1,700 acres from Rural Reserve to land planned and zoned for industrial use such as high-technology, commercial use, and manufacturing (pg. 15 of SB 1586). This **"legislative super siting"** undermines urban and rural reserves- the very backbone of our land use system.

Even if the bill is amended to include a smaller acreage, there has been no demonstration that this land is needed for industrial development, or analysis of the impacts on farmland, natural resources, and other public values.

Land use decisions normally have extensive information showing how the land is needed and how infrastructure on the properties will be provided. They have multiple public hearings where officials making the decisions must disclose all ex parte communications. In the case of SB 1586, there have been no similar public process. We only see a 6-page prospectus on the details of the project. There have been no local public meetings, and this hearing was scheduled before amendments were posted. This process contravenes the public role in deciding how their communities are shaped.

Passage of SB 1586 goes against the letter and spirit of our land use system.

Thankyou for the opportunity to comment.



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