

Submitter: Karen Wolfgang
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1586

Chair Broadman and members of the committee,

My name is Karen Wolfgang, and I urge you to vote no on SB 1586. I am a lifelong Oregonian and a resident of East Portland who, while growing up in West Slope, saw Hillsboro expand such that the riding stables I used to go to were consumed by housing developments. I think we should be welcoming people here to denser developments, and I can ride elsewhere. But once we develop, we can't go back, and there is another development push underway that as far as I'm concerned has absolutely no redeeming value.

Data centers are not the industry we need more of. They are insanely water intensive and don't create jobs or tax revenue. The bill would allow almost unlimited data centers as long as they're "attached" to another business. That's just nuts.

If we do decide we want more data centers, or to prioritize other industrial land use, we have plenty of land inside of our urban growth boundaries already. (As the state does not even have an industrial lands inventory, we don't have the exact information about what we have that would help us invest in those lands so we can minimize our costs and the impacts on surrounding farmland...so maybe we should create one. But that's another issue.)

Taking this land would irreparably harm agriculture, as it has some of the very best soils on earth that it is essential to protect for agricultural uses. Losing a large section of farmland that connects Washington county's farm country together could irreparably harm the entire agriculture sector. The community expects the land in question here to remain rural until 2065 and local farmers and businesses alike are making decisions based on that fact.

We should not be using our tax dollars to incentivize low-job industries that waste our energy and natural resources and are profitable on their own – especially when we're in a budget crisis. The only ones who want this expansion are the landowners inside the 1700 acres and their lobbyist...who, by the way, would make hundreds of millions of dollars from the sale of this land.

For these reasons and more, please vote no on SB 1586.