

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

For the record, my name is Allison Gates and I urge you to vote no on SB 1586. I am a 25 year old 5th generation farmer here in Washington county and care deeply for the future of agriculture in Washington county and in Hillsboro. I want to continue my family's legacy farming but the development of farmland here has made it difficult and puts the future of Washington county's agricultural industry at risk.

We have plenty of land inside of our urban growth boundaries already for industries including high-tech. There's over 10,000 acres of industrial land around the state and 500 just next door to this land in Hillsboro. Hillsboro has had 15 years to attract high-job industries but instead is filling it rapidly with data centers and warehouses. The state does not even have an industrial lands inventory. We should know what we have and invest in those lands so we can minimize our costs and the impacts on surrounding farmland. We would bear the costs of this sprawl. Hillsboro hasn't shown detailed figures, but even their document shows they won't break even for 34 years. While we've heard that the bill may be amended to remove a provision that would double the tax break to businesses including data centers, another bill this session would extend a similar tax break. 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. Taking this land irreparably harms another industry – agriculture. Agriculture depends on soil, and this land has some of the best in the world. Class 1 soils only make up about 2% of the soils in the Willamette River Basin and are the very best soils on earth. These are Class 1 and Class 2 soils and it is essential that we protect them for agricultural uses. Further, losing this large section of farmland that connects Washington county's farm country together could irreparably harm the entire industry.