



February 12, 2026

To: Chair Broadman and Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue

RE: Opposition to SB 1586

On behalf of the West Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District (WMSWCD), I write in strong opposition to SB 1586. This bill would convert approximately 1,700 acres of designated Rural Reserve farmland to industrial use by skirting Oregon's established land use planning system. Although focused on Washington County, the precedent it sets threatens the integrity of the statewide framework that protects farmland and natural resources, including in West Multnomah County.

WMSWCD works to protect and restore streams, support resilient farms, and conserve the agricultural lands that sustain our communities. Oregon's Urban and Rural Reserve system was designed to balance economic development with long-term protection of high-value farmland through a transparent, science-based public process. SB 1586 creates a legislative shortcut that overrides that process and undermines the predictability farmers and communities rely on.

Farming on and around Sauvie Island shows what is at stake. Sauvie Island contains some of the region's most productive farmland, supplying fresh food to Portland-area families and supporting small and mid-sized farm businesses, nursery crops, and seasonal jobs. These lands also provide vital floodplain function, wildlife habitat, groundwater recharge, and soil carbon storage. Sauvie Island farmers depend on stable land use protections to make long-term, often multi-generational investments. Weakening Rural Reserve protections anywhere weakens confidence in the system everywhere.

Farmland protection is foundational to economic resilience, food security, and climate stability. Once converted, farmland is permanently lost. SB 1586 also lacks the robust public process typically required for land use decisions of this scale and significance.

We urge you to uphold Oregon's land use system and **oppose SB 1586**.

Sincerely,

Casey Jogerst, District Manager
West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District
cc: West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Directors