

Submitter: Jacob Roloff  
On Behalf Of: Roloff Farms  
Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1586

Dear Chair Broadman, Vice-Chair McLane, and members of the committee:

My name is Jacob Roloff and I'm writing in strong opposition to SB 1586. This bill would put 1,700 acres of prime farmland in Hillsboro at risk of industrial development.

I was born and raised in Helvetia, and I have seen the slow creep of the UGB for my whole life. I left my family farm for a year or two and have been back for the last 5 years farming it. One thing I have appreciated is the uniqueness of our soil. You can throw seeds and spit, and you're liable to grow a bumper crop.

Oregon's average age of farmers is 58.6 years old and always climbing. It's well known that farmers don't do what they do for their love of money; they do it to feed us. And, with the growth of agritourism, to let others see and enjoy where their food comes from.

Why would we pave over our world-class soils and destroy local farm businesses, when we have not utilized the industrial lands already available in this region and beyond? The need to rezone this land has not been demonstrated. There are at least 10,000 acres of industrial lands already available inside Oregon's urban growth boundaries, including several hundred ready to develop in Hillsboro alone.

I am deeply concerned about the State Legislature making this irreversible, irresponsible and unjustified decision, for so many reasons.

This land was promised to remain EFU until 2065 and renegeing on that promise with such little amount of local and public input is egregious. This land and this soil are utterly precious as we deal with climate change and food insecurity due to the economic gutter the people of this country find themselves in. Land like this cannot be given away for the false promise of jobs; jobs that seem to evaporate once critical deadlines pass, or when the construction is finished.

There is no inevitability to technological growth at all costs. You all can decide the manner in which it happens, and preferably the people living nearby would also be in on that decision; I do not believe paving over farmland benefits Hillsboro or Oregon or the world right now.

Once you pave over farmland, you cannot get it back. A decision of this caliber should not be taken lightly. A short session is not an appropriate time to try to pass

such a hugely controversial piece of legislation through.

For these reasons, I urge you to vote no on SB 1586.

It does not have any sideboards in place to fulfill its empty promise to create jobs, the land is not necessary, and the consequences are irreversible.

Thank you,

Jacob Roloff

Roloff Farms  
&  
Helvetia Gardens