

Dear Chair Broadman, Vice Chair McLane, and members of the Committee,

My name is John Stone, and I am the president of Save Scholls, an organization dedicated to preserving and protecting Oregon's irreplaceable farmland. As an Oregonian, I strongly oppose due to its irreversible harm to prime agricultural land and its direct circumvention of our state's landmark land-use planning system.

The land targeted by this bill—approximately 1,700 acres north of Hillsboro—is among the finest farmland in the world, featuring exceptional soil quality, natural drainage, and subirrigation potential. These soils are a scarce, non-renewable resource that supports high-value crops essential to Oregon's identity and economy. Once paved over for industrial development, this productive capacity and top-tier farmland are lost forever—no reclamation is possible.

Agriculture remains a cornerstone of Oregon's prosperity. According to the **2025 Oregon State Board of Agriculture report**, the agriculture, food, and fiber sector is linked to **15.4% of statewide sales, 20.3% of jobs, and 12.9% of value-added** in the economy. Oregon leads the nation in commodities like hazelnuts, Christmas trees, grass seed, and nursery stock. Continually eroding this vital sector threatens rural communities, food security, and long-term economic diversity.

Oregon's beauty and livability stem directly from our pioneering **1973 land-use laws**, which protect farmland and forests from unchecked sprawl. These laws have earned national acclaim by requiring urban growth boundaries, public processes, and data-driven needs assessments. **SB 1586** bypasses this system—ignoring the rural reserve protections established in the 2014 Grand Bargain—and overrides Metro's rigorous planning.

Metro's **2024 Urban Growth Report** clearly demonstrates that no such expansion is needed: it identifies **a regional surplus of 3,930 acres** of industrial land beyond what is required for baseline employment forecasts, **with over 5,000 acres** of buildable industrial land already inside the current urban growth boundary. We have ample opportunities within existing boundaries to accommodate growth responsibly—without sacrificing irreplaceable farmland.

I urge you to honor Oregon's commitment to balanced, sustainable development. Please vote **no on SB 1586**.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

John Stone

President, Save Scholls

