

Submitter: Ethan Seltzer

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1586

To the Members of the Committee: I am testifying in strong opposition to the UGB expansion provisions of SB 1586. By way of introduction, I am an Emeritus Professor of Urban Studies and Planning at Portland State University, have served as the Land Use Supervisor for Metro in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and both in my planning practice and academic research have focused on regional planning and growth management, particularly UGBs, in Oregon and elsewhere. The original UGB expansion proposal in SB 1586 was for 1700 acres of rural reserves in Washington County, adjacent to Hillsboro, and the current proposal is for 373 acres corresponding to the SB 4 acreage originally associated with the unsuccessful Semiconductor Research Center from two sessions ago. Whether 1700 acres or 373 acres, this is a bad proposal and should be removed from what is otherwise needed legislation. This UGB amendment is wrong for several reasons: There is no factually demonstrated need for this expansion. No actual evidence has been provided by the proponents or by Metro to support the contention that this land is needed to meet any specific or forecast need. This turns 50 years of land use planning in Oregon to stop sprawl and preserve farmland on its head. Second, it is in the wrong location. This is land designated as a "rural reserve" and intended to not be considered for any near-term UGB expansions. Simply put, this is the wrong location if a need for new industrial land was actually needed. The proposed action throws out the time, expense, and trust placed in Metro and local governments through the urban and rural reserves process. Third, Senator Sollman and Metro have stated that this returns planning authority to Metro when, in fact, it uses an act of the legislature to make an end run around Metro's processes and analysis. If this is a restoration of authority it means that Metro, going forward, actually has none. Fourth, the current 373 acre proposal is based on arguments made several years ago when Intel was a more robust company and the future for semiconductor research and production in this region was similarly more robust. Those conditions don't exist today, and to assert that this expansion is needed now based on that past work is simply false, misleading, and not based on any facts. Fifth, Metro has no capacity to enforce any conditions placed on UGB expansions. If the intended uses do not materialize as described by proponents, then there will be tremendous pressure to use the land for more general urban purposes. This is something that we've seen time and again over the last 50 years, and in this case, Metro has never been able to make a conditioned UGB expansion stick. One only has to look at the use of prime industrial land in Hillsboro for Top Golf, play fields, and data centers to conclude that expecting lands like these to generate a wealth of highly paid jobs is little more than rhetoric. Land doesn't create good jobs, and we have land already inside the UGB for meeting the land need associated with good jobs. This expansion is likely of great benefit to

land owners and developers, but that doesn't make it of great benefit to the public, to job seekers, or to our economy. For all of these reasons, I urge you to remove any UGB expansion proposal from SB 1586. Thank you for your attention to this matter.