

Testimony in opposition to SB 1586

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Corvallis, OR

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Chair Broadman and members of the committee:

We write in strong opposition to SB 1586, a monument to the relentless and unwarranted demands of people/organizations who don't know the meaning of the word NO. The local community says NO. The normal Oregon land use process says NO.

The legislature should say NO to losing 1,700 acres in Washington County that include some of the state's best soils, especially when there are alternatives within existing UGB. It's sad that SB 1586 is even getting a hearing – just 12 years after the so-called 2014 "Grand Bargain" (aka land grab) that should last for many more decades.

The 2014 action has had consequences for farmers, and this one would only compound the loss of agricultural service providers and other impacts.

Data centers are a drain on communities. They don't provide many well-paying jobs, and they suck in power and water quite literally like there is no tomorrow. And they get tax breaks to do this? The AI bubble may burst, but the damage will be done regardless. If you need to throw "eco devo" bucks around, how about some actual rural economic help, like broadband?

We have a small farm on EFU land just outside the UGB of Corvallis, where we grow older varieties of orchard fruit to sell mostly at two farmers' markets in Benton County. Farms like ours add to the quality and diversity of food available in our communities.

Smaller small farms need to market fairly close to home. If you move the UGB boundary again with this bill, you are ensuring that there will be fewer such farms able to pencil out the trips to participate in local food systems.

If our parcel of land were not protected by EFU, we never would have been able to start our farm. Long before we arrived to the promised land of Oregon many decades ago, this land would have been forever lost to McMansions or industrial development.

Way fewer people in our county would be able to taste so many apple varieties from the 19th and 20th centuries. Our neighbors have a farm stand full of diverse, high quality products. That also would not be here, but for the wisdom of legislators who enacted SB 100.

High quality fresh produce is available to lower-income members of our community who used SNAP and Double Up Food Bucks at our farmers' markets. An apple that has lived in cold storage for months before landing at a chain grocery store is not the same thing.

Sincerely,

Larry and Rebecca Landis, Territorial Road Orchard