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February 11, 2026

Senate Committee on Housing and Development
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St., NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Please vote “NO” on SB 1578 - Allows counties with a population density of less than 30 people per square mile to rezone up to 50 acres to be divided and developed for residential dwellings of at least five units per acre. Sunsets January 2, 2034. Expands allowed development of accessory dwelling units to farmland with certain existing nonfarm dwellings. Allows the development of larger rural accessory dwelling units.

Dear Chair Pham, Vice Chair Anderson and Members of the Senate Committee on Housing and Development

Friends of Marion County is an independent 501(c)(3) farmland protection organization founded in 1998. Our mission is to protect farm and forestland, parks, and open space in Marion County.

Please oppose and remove SB 1578 from consideration by the 2026 Legislature.

1)

SB 1578 is an attempt to degrade Oregon’s land use system and convert protected farmlands outside UGBs into inefficient residential sprawl.

2)

SB 1578 would break up farm and forest lands for additional development without a showing of need to support farm or forestry operations.

3)

SB 1578 would allow new groundwater wells to serve the new dwellings which would strain Oregon's groundwater resources.

4)

SB 1578 fails to protect from sprawl by allowing population growth outside UGBs which will create even more greenhouse gas emissions.

5)

SB 1578 would violate the agreement from the 2021 Legislature that restricted Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) to 900 sq. ft. This proposal permitting 2,500 sq. ft ADUs would create a nightmare by permitting 2 full-size dwelling units onto one parcel.

6)

SB 1578 is complex and controversial and should not move forward in the short session.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,
Roger Kaye, Pres.
FriendsOfMarionCounty@gmail.com