

February 15, 2026

Dear Chair Meek and Committee Members:

I implore you to oppose SB 1586 which only benefits industrial businesses in one state district, and yet indirectly harms all Oregonians in numerous ways! The bill would bring 1,700 acres of Oregon's best farmland into Hillsboro's UGB for industrial use—for reasons that not only undermine Oregon's land use system, but are self-serving and perpetuate corporate greed over the interests of Oregonians during a time when most of us need more support than ever.

I have stood next to this land and personally observed how productive it is, how it jointly supports working lands and the environment (e.g., reduces global warming), and how it reflects our state's beauty!

Hillsboro received over 1,000 acres of industrial land in 2014, which was an ample 50-year supply. But the city has been burning through this land quickly just to build data centers. Studies have repeatedly shown that post-construction, data centers create few jobs that are generally not high-paying. The studies and the experience of hundreds of communities have also shown how data centers drive up energy bills, diver water that should be used for public and environmental purposes, and taken up land that could be used to actually create good jobs.

While this bill claims to not allow stand-alone data centers, the federal definition of “advanced manufacturing” includes data centers. Corporate giants have previously worked around these restrictions by attaching massive data centers to anchor businesses. There are already 29 data centers and counting on the 1,000+ acres of industrial land that Hillsboro has developed directly to the east!

Washington County farmers and residents have loudly opposed this same land grab five other times previously, the latest being during the SB 4 discussions in 2023. Since then, there have been no public hearings or public engagement about this proposal.

We don't need to pave over premier farmland to create good jobs. The CHIPS Act delivered over \$3.18 billion in capital investment to 14 projects—none of which used controversial provisions to request land outside a UGB. SB 1586 relies on a 2023 Semiconductor Task Force Report that claims this land is the only site in the state for semiconductor manufacturing. But the 2023 Semiconductor Committee discovered that the report failed to identify and analyze over 10,000 acres of industrial land. Hillsboro alone has hundreds of acres of unbuilt industrial land available now for this use. What we need is an industrial lands inventory to help businesses locate, not a bill that adds massive amounts of land and infrastructure costs to a state that is struggling to pay for what we have. And Oregon certainly does not need to welcome an industry that receives massive tax abatements in return for few jobs. Hillsboro's numbers don't add up, and this is not good economic development.

In addition to SB 1586's proposed paving over of farmland, this bill proposes extending tax breaks for corporations, many of which are data centers. Data centers are owned by the world's wealthiest companies that can and should be paying their fair share, especially at a time when Oregon is slashing budgets for basic social services that support working Oregonians. SB 1586 confusingly advocates for cutting taxes while also claiming that increased tax revenue will pay for the infrastructure costs of their massive land acquisition.

Thank you for considering my comments.

-Robb Wolfson
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