

Submitter: Megan Blake

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1586

Measures must be taken to stop the destruction of Washington county farmland. This county is known for its nutrient dense soils. Studies have been done on the quality of farmland here. The problem is how corporations are destroying rural Oregon. Many people still like living in small towns! People actually choose to live far away from the over packed neighborhoods, giant warehouse buildings (polluting the air) and having soleless franchises as their only options. There are still stewards of this land that hope to protect the beauty of Washington county. The greed behind the allowed purchase on this land is evil! To take a piece of land that was promised to be protected, a land that should be turned into a protected area, to then just sell it over to a corporation whose mere existence will eventually pollute our beautiful country soils and water ways. Farmers are already facing extreme prejudices from these corrupt land grabs through extreme coercion and taxes. There is a housing and vacant building crisis already happening in Oregon. Too many big corporations are forcing massive builds on small towns across the state. This extreme developing of rural communities with homes 3x the values of the existing residents has caused many empty neighborhoods with new builds to exist across the state. This also causes the housing market to be unattainable for many! I think it's also strange that a normal land owner is only allowed to divide their existing property based on a certain amount of buildable plots. When my family's 40 acre farm was considered for this option they mentioned that each new house had to have at least 2 acres of land. Yet, the golf course in Banks was allowed to have 900 homes in less than half the acreage we have! How does that make sense? Bank's history shows responsible growth for the last 100 years, yet in 2 years for "profit" they will forcefully triple our existing population! This land grab was also done maliciously under the ruse of our previous city council. They asked us to vote on the verbiage that would allow the course to have additional homes added while still maintaining part of the course (300 homes was discussed). The community was told we would have to grow eventually and that this would be the responsible way to do so. Then when it passed, they used this same new verbiage in our bylaws to then allow Holt homes to destroy the entire golf course with new homes! They are forcing 3x the amount of homes we were told we would have. This is why we as citizens have become so mistrusting of our leadership. Time and time again we are shown that our opinions, our health and our shared compassion for the protection of this land is irrelevant in the name of profit! Small towns need protection now more than ever. Rural counties need to stay rural! Not everyone wants the entire countryside paved over! This county was formed by glacier melts that brought nutrient dense soils here...there is a peed moss that is only found here that exists from this glacial melt. There are numerous wild and native plants that will be affected. As a 6th generation of Oregon, my ancestors truly chose

washington county to settle for its beauty, abundance of rich soil and favorable growing seasons. They made this county strong through being stewards of this land. These founders thoughtfully built our county through years of true hard work, desperation for independence and the knowhow to endure when things got hard. The reason farms are at jeopardy now is due to lack of traditional agricultural practices being passed on. Too many people don't have what it takes to be a true farmer/ land owner! City folks keep moving to the country, destroying small towns by turning them into the exact places they moved from! The state needs to protect rural communities before its just one giant scab of destruction. The people need you to do your jobs. We elected you all to be our voice, so please help the will of the people and not corporate greed!