

Submitter:

Linda M

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1586

Good morning, I am a resident of unincorporated Multnomah County in Portland less than a mile from the city border to Hillsboro. I am writing to share my strong opposition to the attempted land grab of some of the states best farmland that was intended to safely remain rural until at least 2065.

I am extremely disappointed by the lack of local public process this is undergoing. We have not been provided the typical analysis, the city of Hillsboro is attempting to slip this by their unsuspecting constituents while they bring in more warehouses and data centers “attached” to other businesses. Hillsboro already has 500 acres of industrial zoned land right next store- there is ample space to expand within this land if the city feels strongly about more development.

In the interest of clarity, I would also like the city or state to provide an industrial lands inventory. We should know what we have and invest in those lands so we can minimize our costs and the impacts on surrounding farmland.

Taking this land irreparably harms the agriculture industry. Agriculture depends on soil, and this land has some of the best in the world. Class 1 soils only make up about 2% of the soils in the Willamette River Basin and are the very best soils on earth. These are Class 1 and Class 2 soils and it is essential that we protect them for agricultural uses. Further, losing this large section of farmland that connects Washington county’s farm country together could irreparably harm the entire industry.

I am submitting this testimony to you with the understanding that the bill may be amended between the opening of testimony and the hearing date. This is exceptionally poor process. If the legislature wants to receive public input on legislation, it needs to let the public know what they are commenting on. But even if the bill is amended to not include a tax abatement, we understand that HB 4084 would extend the same tax abatement - potentially indefinitely. And even if the bill limits the acreage in Hillsboro’s UGB to 373 and in the urban reserve to the remaining 1700 acres, Hillsboro has never proven a need for more land.

Please stop this land grab immediately and let Hillsboro’s farmers continue their incredible stewardship of the land in peace. Along with hundreds of other Portland residents, we are CSA members at a Hillsboro farm. The CSA has been able to keep locally grown, fresh food affordable as inflation skyrockets and economic uncertainty abounds. Your constituents rely directly on the land impacted by this bill.

Thank you for your time,
Linda