

Submitter: Tracie Bonica

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1586

The 1,700 acres that SB 1586 seeks to bring into Hillsboro's UGB are rural reserves that the legislature committed to protect from urbanization until at least 2065 in 2014. The rural reserve threatened by SB 1586 is critical to the overall health of the Tualatin River watershed.

The streams, riparian areas, and wetlands hold surface water, offering flood resilience, slowing erosion, and filtering new water as it enters the watershed. Additionally, these areas provide wildlife habitat for dozens of species of fish, birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles, and insects.

When rural reserves are converted to industrially zoned land as proposed in SB 1586, they are compacted, filled, and paved over with impermeable surfaces. This process permanently destroys wetlands and riparian areas, and often results in channelized or buried streams. This valuable wildlife habitat is gone forever.

In the Tualatin River watershed, the destruction of these areas also results in warmer water temperatures, which are particularly harmful to our sensitive river system and the salmon that return to our waters to reproduce. Warmer water not only damages our river system—it also increases the burden on our wastewater utility provider, Clean Water Services, which is responsible for monitoring and meeting the legally mandated Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for temperature in the Tualatin River.