



Public Comments on Senate Bill 1586

Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue

February 16, 2025

The Oregon Winegrowers Association is a member-driven advocacy organization advancing the interests of the largest agricultural economic impact sector in Oregon. We have hundreds of winery and vineyard members representing over two-thirds of Oregon's wine production. For more than 40 years, OWA has advocated for policies that support the health, growth and economic sustainability of Oregon's wine industry.

OWA writes in opposition to SB 1586 and the proposed land use components. While we understand the interest in supporting economic development and job growth at a critical time for our state, this proposal comes at the direct expense of prime farmland in Washington County that is uniquely suited for high value agriculture. Once agricultural soils are converted to urban uses, they are permanently lost. That is not a reversible decision, and it carries statewide consequences for Oregon agriculture.

Oregon's land use system has helped make Oregon a globally recognized wine region by ensuring that farmland remains available for farming and related uses. Undermining those protections for short term development pressures risks eroding the very framework that has supported decades of agricultural investment and rural economic development.

OWA recognizes that Oregon's land use system is not perfect and should be part of ongoing conversations about modernization and improvement. However, continued one-off exceptions that pull specific parcels of prime farmland into the urban growth boundary creates uncertainty, encourages more carve outs, and weakens the system's overall goals. If changes are needed, they should be addressed through policy discussions, not parcel by parcel exceptions.

OWA respectfully urges the committee to prioritize long term agricultural viability and reject the land use components of SB 1586. Protecting farmland today protects Oregon's agricultural economy, wine industry, and communities for generations to come.