

Submitter: James Baldwin
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1586

Chair Broadman, Vice-Chair McLane, and members of the Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue:

My name is James Baldwin, and I am a community member from Hillsboro. I am writing to you today to strongly oppose SB 1586. This is an unnecessary annexation of EFU-zoned land that hurts farmers, sets a bad precedent for ignoring the public process in land use matters, disregards our high-value soils, and potentially continues to use our dwindling water supply in favor of filling the pockets of a select few.

Your opposition to SB 1586 is important to me because once this land is paved over, there is no going back. We cannot reclaim the high-quality agricultural soil we have here in the Willamette Valley once it is gone. Throwing away our valuable resources like these soils and our water supply for the vague promise of jobs is a foolish choice and one that should have much more input from the local community.

For 10 years, Oregonians have been promised more jobs and increased economic opportunity in return for the sacrifice of high-quality, producing farmland to Big Tech companies and their data centers. All we have received are higher water and electricity bills, waste in natural areas, raised taxes to cover the tax breaks for these giant companies, and the highest unemployment rates since 2020.

Oregon has a thriving community food system because our land use laws protect EFU land close to our urban centers. Without this land, small farmers would not be able to make all the CSAs, farmers markets, and farm stands that Oregonians love possible. SB 1586 is not necessary; there is other land within Hillsboro's UGB and the UGB of neighboring cities like Wilsonville that is better suited.

Do not sacrifice this agricultural land for a vague promise of tech investment. Do not set a precedent of ignoring community input and public process. Do not support SB 1586!

Thank you,

James Baldwin
Hillsboro