

Testimony was given on February 16, 2026 to the Oregon Senate Committee on Revenue and Finance regarding SB-1586

Chair Broadman, Vice-Chair McLane, and members of the committee,

My name is Barry Bolding. I'm an AI executive and a Washington County resident. I've spent my career building the exact type of infrastructure this bill contemplates – as an executive at Amazon Web Services, where my teams helped enable Moderna to use cloud computing to develop their Covid vaccine, and before that at Cray, where I helped build, sell, and deliver the largest supercomputers on the planet for organizations like GE and the Department of Energy. I'm here because my experience tells me SB 1586 has serious structural problems.

The definition loophole is real. This bill references "advanced manufacturing." As of July 2025, that definition was updated to include AI-related data centers. That's not a hypothetical – that is how the industry already thinks and talks about this work. Under SB 1586, an AI data center qualifies as BOTH the manufacturing anchor and the data center. The restriction cancels itself out.

The footprint argument doesn't hold up. Data center technology is shrinking rapidly. Power density per rack has increased fiftyfold in five years. Facilities being built today are already being outpaced by next-generation designs. Converting 1,700 acres of prime farmland for infrastructure that may be obsolete within a decade is a one-way door decision. What is Oregon's plan for its data farm ghost towns in 10, 20, or 30 years? Campuses like Intel's are already at risk for shrinkage – we should be planning to transition those facilities, not building new ones.

The infrastructure argument is a red herring. The claim that fiber and power can't be extended to other locations simply isn't true. Data center operators extend infrastructure to greenfield sites routinely. At my current company, and at AWS before that, we decide where to run simulations and modeling based on one factor alone: where it's cheapest – not where it's closest.

Here's the core question. If this land is truly for advanced manufacturing R&D, those facilities fit comfortably on the thousands of underutilized industrial acres already available in the Metro area. If the land isn't for data centers, then it isn't needed. And if it is for data centers, then this bill is being falsely advertised.

The long-term impacts of this legislation have not been thought through. I urge this committee to pursue a more thoughtful, statewide, coordinated approach to high-tech manufacturing — one that doesn't sacrifice Oregon's best farmland for buildings that may be empty before the mortgages are paid.

Thank you.

Barry Bolding, Ph.D.