

Dear Chair Broadman, Vice Chair McLane, and other members of the Committee,

My name is Jessica McBride and I am a nearly lifelong resident of Washington County. As a resident of Washington County, I'm in strong opposition to SB 1586 because I am concerned about the environmental, economic, and community impacts it will cause.

The 1,700 acres of land in Washington County has been designated as rural reserve and should not be touched until 2065. We are living in a time where trust in our government and institutions is very low. If the state legislature goes back on this promise, that trust will continue to erode. With hundreds of testimonies in opposition and only a few in support, passage of this bill will send a clear message to Oregonians that their views matter less than those of large corporations. That's not democracy.

Agriculture is Oregon's second largest industry, and it is incredibly frustrating to see state lawmakers who claim to want to support industry and jobs intentionally pit one industry against another. The soil in rural Washington County is top tier. It is irresponsible and frankly dangerous to our local food supply to trade this land away for the apparent promise of jobs.

While I appreciate the provision that does not allow stand alone data centers, it has a glaring loophole that allows data centers to be an accessory to other uses without regulation. Data centers do not bring long term family wage jobs. Tax breaks for large corporations do not translate into jobs or any other community benefit. We've seen this cycle play out, over and over with businesses such as Intel and Nike receiving large tax breaks, and continuing to lay off thousands of workers. All while our energy prices continue to rise.

Oregon does need to have meaningful conversations about land-use but this rushed legislation seems to be more about capitulating to large corporations and trading political favors than actually serving Oregonians. It is undemocratic to hold closed door negotiations with regional governments and release amendments less than an hour prior to the public hearing.

As an Oregonian, resident of Washington County, and human, I implore you to spend the short session focused on the most urgent needs in Oregon. Decouple our state taxes from federal, pass the immigrant justice package, and invest in our public schools and child care.

I'm tired of hearing about Oregon's budget woes, only to then see legislators proposing even more tax breaks for unaccountable billion dollar companies that do not create long-term jobs and pollute our air and water.

I strongly urge your opposition to SB 1586.

Thank you,
Jessica McBride