

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

I am writing in Opposition to SB 1586.

My name is Ruth Harshfield and I am a resident of Washington County. I oppose SB 1586 and any amendments that would still expand the Hillsboro UGB, regardless of acreage, because it undermines the statewide land use planning program, threatens the agricultural economy in Washington County, and fails to take into account industrial land available within urban growth boundaries across the state.

In 2014 the legislature made a commitment that these 1,700 acres would be protected until at least 2065. This 50-year promise is to provide landowners with the confidence they need to invest in their farming operation because they don't have to worry about their land being rezoned and urbanized right after investing their time and money into it. Instead, nearly every year the legislature has proposed bringing this land into Hillsboro's UGB, for one use or another. This does not provide confidence but rather encourages speculative landholding that keeps this high-value farmland out of the hands of people who really do want to farm.

Lastly, SB 1586 fails to take into account geographic equity and the thousands of acres of industrial land available within UGBs across the state. Oregon needs a statewide approach to economic development, so all Oregonians can thrive. How will someone in Southern or Central Oregon benefit from the state doubling down on investments in Hillsboro? Oregon also needs a statewide industrial lands inventory, so we can all operate off the same information about where there is available land and how much there is, rather than relying on an incomplete report.

For these reasons and more, I ask that you vote no on SB 1586 and work to rebuild trust with the Hillsboro and Washington County community.

Thank you