

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

Dear Chair and Members of the Finance and Revenue Committee:

I am writing to urge you to vote NO on SB 1586 (the “Oregon JOBS Act”), sponsored by Senator Sollman.

Even with the new amendments, SB 1586 is completely unacceptable. It would bring 1,700 acres of some of the best farmland in the world into Hillsboro’s Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) for industrial use via special legislation--completely bypassing Oregon’s well-established land use planning process. Yet Hillsboro already expanded its UGB by over 1,000 acres of industrial land in 2014, which created an ample 50-year supply.

Although the bill’s backers claim that it would not allow for stand-alone data centers, the bill has a huge loophole that would in fact permit almost unlimited data centers, provided they are “attached” to another business. This exception is big enough to drive a utility truck through. What’s more, the federal definition of “advanced manufacturing” specifically includes data centers, and massive data centers attached to anchor business could fill this site just like Hillsboro’s 1,000+ acres of industrial land to the east — 29 data centers and counting.

Data centers create very few, relatively low-paying, jobs. Oregon certainly does not need to welcome further expansion of an industry that consumes massive amounts of electricity, is the main cause of rapidly increasing power rates paid by residents, and receives massive tax abatements in return for very few jobs. And we certainly do not need to pave over what is literally some of the nation’s very highest quality farmland to create more jobs in the first place. Hillsboro alone has hundreds of acres of unbuilt industrial land available for this use, and the Portland metro area has roughly 10,000 acres of undeveloped land already inside the UGB.

The precedent set by SB 1586 is also extremely dangerous. If lobbyists and a single legislator can succeed in using custom-made legislation to violate Oregon’s well-established land use process and break the UGB to enrich a small group of wellconnected landowners, then our land use regulation system will be rendered useless.

Public sentiment is also overwhelmingly against SB 1586: The testimony submitted on this bill is so lopsided (with nearly 98% opposed, and only a handful of chamber of commerce and business representatives in favor) that it’s apparent that only people

who stand to gain financially are in support of this bill. Legislators who vote yes will likely get significant pushback from their constituents.

I urge you to reject SB 1586, even with the new amendments. It is an irresponsible and entirely unnecessary bill that will harm all Oregonians. This bill will not create good jobs, but it will pave over nearly 2,000 acres of the nation's best farmland and significantly increase energy and water consumption; and it sets a terrible, anti-democratic precedent by further violating Oregon's established land use regulation system.

Please vote NO on SB 1586 in this committee and on the Senate floor.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Dan Jaffee