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

Now I have a clear picture. This is Oregon SB 1586, the Oregon JOBS Act, which includes a provision expanding Hillsboro's urban growth boundary (UGB) to incorporate approximately 1,700 acres of prime farmland. Here's a strong written opposition statement:

#### WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

Oregon Senate Finance and Revenue Committee

Senate Bill 1586 – Oregon JOBS Act

Re: Urban Growth Boundary Expansion / Farmland Conversion Provision

Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chair Reschke, Vice-Chair Walters, and Members of the Committee:

I submit this testimony in strong opposition to the farmland conversion provisions contained in Senate Bill 1586. While I recognize that job creation and economic development are legitimate and pressing goals for Oregon — particularly following the loss of more than 25,000 jobs in 2025 — the solution proposed in this bill comes at an unacceptable cost to Oregon's irreplaceable agricultural heritage and its carefully constructed land use system.

SB 1586 proposes to expand Hillsboro's urban growth boundary to absorb approximately 1,700 acres of high-quality Willamette Valley farmland. According to testimony already submitted by the Oregon Seed Council, roughly 1,500 of those 1,700 acres are actively and productively farmed today. These are not idle or marginal lands. They are growing grass and clover seed, blueberries, hazelnuts, and wheat — crops that generate real income, real jobs, and real economic activity right now. This bill frames itself as a jobs bill, but it would eliminate existing agricultural jobs and businesses in order to speculatively create new ones. That is not sound economic policy.

Oregon's land use planning system — built over decades and long admired nationally — exists precisely to prevent this kind of unnecessary and irreversible conversion. The Urban Growth Boundary process is designed to ensure that land is brought into development only when there is a demonstrated need and when existing developed lands have been meaningfully utilized. That threshold has not been met here. As testimony from Roloff Farms and others has made clear, there are already more than 10,000 acres of industrial lands inside Oregon's existing urban growth boundaries statewide, including several hundred acres of undeveloped, ready-to-build industrial land in Hillsboro itself. There is no rational justification to pave over prime farmland when suitable industrial land already sits available and unused.

The Willamette Valley soils proposed for conversion are among the most productive in the nation. Once paved, they are gone forever. No tax credit, no job

announcement, and no economic forecast can restore what is lost when world-class agricultural soil is buried under concrete and industrial infrastructure. We must be honest with ourselves: the semiconductor and advanced manufacturing industries, however important, do not require us to sacrifice Oregon's agricultural identity and land use integrity to succeed.

I urge the committee to separate the farmland conversion provisions from SB 1586 entirely. Oregon can pursue semiconductor investment, R&D tax credits, streamlined permitting, and advanced manufacturing growth without circumventing our land use laws or destroying the farms that have sustained Oregon communities for generations. A jobs bill that creates jobs by eliminating jobs is not a solution — it is a trade-off that Oregon's farmers, rural communities, and future generations cannot afford.

Please protect Oregon's prime farmland. Remove the Urban Growth Boundary expansion from SB 1586.

Respectfully submitted,

Eugene Griffith