

Submitter: Erik Bender

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1586

I'm against the conversion of farmlands in Oregon. Unlike other types of development, data centers involve massive concrete pads and deep cooling infrastructure that permanently alter soil structure. Once a farm is converted, it is effectively removed from the food production cycle forever; you cannot simply "un-build" these facilities to return to organic farming.

Data centers require millions of gallons daily for cooling. In many regions, they draw from the same aquifers as local farms, risking groundwater depletion and contamination.

While construction creates temporary work, a facility covering hundreds of acres may only employ 30 to 50 permanent staff. This provides a much lower long-term economic boost compared to a diverse agricultural economy that supports equipment dealers, processors, and seasonal labor.