

Submitter: Seven Challis
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB78

I urge you to oppose SB 78 and SB 79 which consistutute a direct assault on rural Oregonians and a gross overreach of government.

96% of all privately owned rural land (land outside UGB's) is zoned for farm, forest or mixed farm/forest use thus the impact of regulation targeting these lands impacts a wide range of people, properties and uses. Existing non-farm uses are already heavily regulated and by law are "the exception and that approval for them should be difficult to obtain". As an Oregon homeowner and landowner going through the permitting process, I can testify to this directly. I have spent more than a year and a vast sum of money dilligently following guidelines in order to simply PREPARE a permit application. Not all Oregonians wish to live in cities and we must allow for responsible development outside of UGBs. Oregon only approves approximately 100 non-farm dwellings statewide each year and given that Oregon needs to produce 36,000 homes EACH YEAR just to keep up with demand, this is a very tiny drop in a very big bucket.

It is a common argument that development on EFU lands increases the cost of farm land. This is simply UNTRUE. There is no evidence that Non-farm dwellings negatively impact the agriculture industry. Non-farm dwellings are ALREADY restricted in many ways such as building only on soils that are too poor to farm and where development will not impact the cost or practices of farming. Land such as mine has never been farmed and simply cannot be farmed profitably and thus the best uses of this land must include housing development. In Deschutes county where my land is, many farms are "hobby farms" where the farming operations can only exists since they are subsidised by the property owners with revenue from non-farm sources. It is regulation such as SB 78 and SB 79 that limits housing supply and directly causes the increase in ALL (not just farm/forest) property prices. We must allow the development of homes, including rural homes which many people such as myself wish to live in to ease the lack of supply of housing. As long as Oregon puts all of its rural areas off-limits for housing, we will never meet the needed housing targets.

Please OPPOSE this bills SB 78 and SB 79.