

Submitter:

Marissa Theve

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure:

SB70

Greetings,

I am a soil scientist who lives in Salem who has been watching the important legislation like HB2001 open up development opportunities within urban growth boundaries to assist with the housing crisis sustainably and ultimately, helping to work towards the end of homelessness in our state. I am so excited and proud of our legislature for setting the stage for what I see as the most robust land management system in the country.

Tinkering the definition of "high value" farmland to allow for sprawling development is not appropriate nor does it align with the spirit of SB100, which has otherwise effectively preserved beautiful rural Oregon. With the knowledge that climate change has arrived, we must recognize that increased drought and thus irrigation is on the horizon, so the broader definition of "high value" soils which includes areas with high agricultural potential when irrigation is present, will likely only become more important and accurate moving forward. Preparing for a future with increased population density in our urban areas will also mean an increase in demand for local food. Now is not the time to legislate acres out of food or fiber production. Sprawl development in rural spaces also drains precious federal, state, and county resources that must support new roads, power lines, and other infrastructure for the benefit of relatively few people indefinitely after the developers have long gone. I urge you to cut our SB16 soil losses and keep the broader definition of "high value" soils to protect the lands that make our state so unique.