

Submitter: Adam Sunshine
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1578
Dar Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Anderson, and members of the Senate Committee on Housing & Development,

I am writing today to ask you to oppose SB 1578.

I am an Oregonian who works directly with our local food system and agricultural community. I currently work as a farmers' market manager, and I hope one day to have a farm of my own here in Oregon. My ability (and the ability of many aspiring farmers who don't have generational wealth) to build a future in this state depends on strong land use policies that protect agricultural and forest lands while directing growth to appropriate places.

I want to be clear: I support housing development, and I recognize the urgent need for more homes across Oregon. But housing solutions should focus on our cities and towns, where infrastructure, services, and community already exist. Allowing urban-density residential development on agricultural and forest lands undermines the very land base that farming, forestry, and rural economies depend on.

Oregon's land use system is one of the reasons I have chosen to build my life and career here. It creates clarity, stability, and long-term stewardship—values that are essential for people who want to work the land and feed their communities. SB 1578 would weaken that system by allowing rezoning of up to 50 acres of resource land and large, non-farm-related accessory dwelling units in exclusive farm use zones, without complying with state planning laws. This sets a troubling precedent and moves us closer to scattered development that permanently fragments farmland and forestland.

There are already pathways to build housing on farm and forest land when it is appropriate. Expanding those allowances without adequate planning risks short-term gains at the expense of long-term public benefit.

With so many thoughtful housing and land use solutions available, I urge you to protect Oregon's resource lands, uphold our statewide planning framework, and reject SB 1578.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Adam Sunshine