



March 5, 2025

Dear Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Nash, and members of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildlife:

Please do not allow SB 788 to move forward. At best, it is unnecessary. At worst, it mandates the destruction of farm land.

Events are already allowed in the Exclusive Farm Use (EFU) zone in numerous ways. Farm stands, cideries, wineries, and breweries can all host events promoting their farm use under ORS 215.283(1). Other farm operations can host events supportive of agriculture by obtaining an agri-tourism permit under ORS 215.283(4)-(6). There is simply no need for this bill; appropriate events are already allowed.

At worst, this bill amounts to the state forcing counties to destroy farm land. It inserts unspecified “events” into ORS 215.283(1). These so-called “sub 1” uses *must be allowed by the county*. The farm impacts test does not apply.

Hood River County is renown for its fruit orchards. To protect those irreplaceable soils, our farm economy, and the rural character of the upper valley, Hood River County does not allow commercial events on EFU land. This bill would abolish that choice. The immediate effect would be a spike in the price of “farm” land, followed by a metastases of concert venues, commercial rental facilities, and convention centers. In addition to the irrevocable destruction of the land paved over for venues and parking, the impact of increased traffic and public access on local orchardists and farmers is both significant and well documented.

We urge you to continue allowing counties chose for themselves how to manage events on farm land, rather than forcing commercial uses into EFU zones.

Respectfully,

Chris Robuck, Co-President
Thrive Hood River