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Senate Committee on Energy and the Environment

Hon. Committee Members:

As a farmer, Farm Bureau member, and resident of Oregon I am asking those of you on the Energy and Environment committee to stop SB 16 before it does serious harm to Oregon. I am opposed to the concept of special exceptions to laws in general and to this bill in particular, for the following reasons:

1. The fact that there is unused or under used land in a farming area does not mean it should be filled with houses. This bill is particularly egregious because it is so blatantly directed at the wealthy who want their mansion in the country. Non farm residences conflict with agricultural areas in many ways, such as complaints about sprays and noise, increased high speed traffic on rural roads, pushing up land prices and destabilizing the land use pattern in general.
2. With Climate change becoming a critical issue, the efficiencies of building nonfarm housing within an Urban Growth Boundary has never been more important. 200 houses may not seem like much but multiplying that 200 by the average trips per day times the miles to town times the next 50 years generates a large amount of energy and carbon we should not be allocating for this use.
3. The bill is not designed just to accommodate a few mansions, the clear aim of its author is to break down the land use system in general in the name of personal freedom. Personal freedom is good, when it doesn't create a disaster for the community in general. In my Grange community we have a slogan we try to live by:

In essentials, unity

In nonessentials, liberty

In all things, charity.

Surviving climate change and preserving our agricultural economy are absolutely essential things. There is plenty of room in Ontario and Nyssa's UGB to build very nice houses for the wealthy without putting agriculture at risk, not to mention further dividing the state between those who can afford mansions in the country and those who cannot.