

Submitter: Amy Houchen
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1578

Dear Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Anderson, and members of the Senate Committee on Housing and Development,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on SB 1578. I urge you to vote "no" on this bill.

I am an Oregonian who opposes SB 1578 because it allows random urban developments of urban-density housing on rural agricultural and forest land without considering the safeguards that protect Oregon's farms, ranches, forests, natural resources and rural communities from inappropriate and harmful development.

Oregon has popular comprehensive land use laws with good reason. Unregulated development is generally focused on only one thing—making money for the developer, without considering the costs imposed on others. My sister and brother-in-law are Oregon farmers, and they assure me that increasing development on farmland makes it harder for them to farm. Increased traffic and rising land costs are just a few of the problems that also affect ranchers and forest operations.

Development also threatens fish and wildlife habitat and cultural resources. It increases wildfire risks and siphons off water. And piecemeal development also imposes costs of roads and urban services on the development's neighbors and local governments.

Thanks to Oregon's land use planning, there is plenty of land available for housing where there is already appropriate infrastructure. That's where high-density housing belongs—not in farm, ranch, or forest land.

So I urge you to reject SB 1578.

Thanks for considering my comments and allowing this opportunity for public input.

Respectfully,

Amy Houchen