



1000 Friends of Oregon
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March 7, 2025

Senate Committee on Natural Resources & Wildfire
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: Vote "No" on SB 788

Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Nash, and members of the committee:

1000 Friends of Oregon is a nonprofit, membership organization that works with Oregonians to support livable urban and rural communities, protect family farms, forests and natural areas, and provide transportation and housing choices. 1000 Friends opposes SB 788.

SB 788, would add "wedding or event venue" to the list of outright allowed uses on land zoned for Exclusive Farm Use east of the Cascades and in counties with a population of fewer than 90,000. Oregon law already allows counties to choose if they want to allow for commercial events and activities on rural lands, which would include uses such as wedding and event centers as agritourism activities permitted under ORS 215.283(4)-(6). Counties are not mandated to establish these provisions within their land use codes, but rather may choose to. SB 788 would require counties to authorize these land uses.

Commercial events, and especially weddings, are many times incompatible with the realities of commercial farming. Farm operations produce noise, dust, heavy vehicle use, pesticide and herbicide application, and odors. Unlike the current provisions that may authorize wedding and event venues, SB 788 would not require any consideration of the impacts to surrounding farm and forest operations.

SB 788 is unnecessary. Counties already have the ability to authorize weddings and event venues. Unlike the current law, SB 788 does not protect surrounding farming and forest operations.

Please vote "no" on SB 788.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James W. Johnson".

Jim Johnson
Working Lands Policy Director

Since our founding in 1974, we have worked with Oregonians to enhance our quality of life by building livable urban and rural communities, protecting family farms and forests, and conserving natural areas.