

Submitter: Dean Moberg
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB878

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

I write to express my strong opposition to SB-438 and SB-878, which would both allow additional residential development in rural areas and whittle away at farm and forest land protections provided by our historic Oregon Land Use Act.

I have worked in agriculture for 50 years, as a farm worker milking cows, driving tractors, and harvesting vegetables; as a high school agriculture teacher; as a conservationist or the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service; as co-author of The Soils of Oregon reference book; as an elected director of a soil and water conservation district; and as the owner of a small agricultural consulting firm specializing in the improvement of soil on Oregon farms.

Since moving to Washington County 30 years ago, I have seen farm and forest land lost by urban growth boundary expansion and Measure 49 claims. Development on farm and forestland here is a critical issue, as it permanently takes world-class soils out of production, increases traffic on the rural roads farmers and foresters need to move equipment and products, and increases the cost of farmland.

SB-438 and SB-878 would allow additional housing for relatives of existing homes. Such habitation by relatives would be a temporary situation lasting, at most, a few decades. However, the additional dwelling sites would last forever. Additionally, there are already several reasonable options for providing housing for relatives and farmworkers, and these bills are not necessary.

Please vote NO on SB-438 and SB-878.

Thank you for your consideration and thank you for your service to Oregon.

Dean P. Moberg