

Submitter: Nellie McAdams

On Behalf
Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure: HB2192

Dear Chair Helm and Members of the House Agriculture and Land Use Committee:

I write to you in opposition to HB 2192. In 2013, the replacement provisions for dwellings on farmland were temporarily amended to fix a specific problem: Farmers with long disused, dilapidated, and damaged farm dwellings on their property wanted the ability to demolish the structures to avoid creating a nuisance. The temporary replacement dwelling provision allowed farmers time to both remove and replace those structures. That problem has been addressed and the existing law will sunset in 2024.

This legislation would create a lasting, unnecessary, and dangerous loophole in the land use program. Existing law already allows landowners to replace dwellings that are on the property but in a state of disrepair. HB 2192 would appear to allow landowners to replace a dwelling that no longer exists on the property and did not exist when the current owner purchased the property. It creates a potentially 50-year "look back" window.

Forest fires in the state are of increasing concern. Most forest fires are human caused, and allowing additional forest dwellings will not only increase the likelihood of human-caused forest fires, but will increase the monetary and human cost of fighting those forest fires, as firefighters are called to defend dispersed forest dwellings. Allowing fragmentation of forest lands also means that these properties are unlikely to be used for timber harvest, further cutting into rural economies.

I urge you please not to support this bill.

Respectfully,
Nellie McAdams