



SAVE HELVETIA

13260 NW Bishop Rd
Hillsboro, OR 97124
March 3, 2025

Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire

Support for SB 77

Save Helvetia is a private non-profit advocacy organization that has been active over 15 years to protect farm and forestlands in Washington County. We organized in 2010 during the Urban and Rural Reserves planning process, studying lands in and around the Helvetia area, submitting testimonies to Washington County, Metro, and LCDC. We then became appellants to the Oregon State Court of Appeals, prevailing in our citizen science assertions that the county and Metro had misapplied the law and administrative rules in selecting the urban and rural reserves. The court's ruling invalidated the proposed reserves and the negotiated result became the Grand Bargain legislation (HB 4078) of 2014. This legislation had unanimous and bipartisan support from both houses of the legislature. We have since become an affiliate of 1000 Friends of Oregon, monitoring and defending land use laws and principles in Washington County.

Support for SB 77

The vitality of farming requires some guardrails for success. There are occasions when some have manipulated home occupation on EFU lands, morphing them into non-farm uses such as VRBO settings, B & B settings, hotels, restaurants, and event centers. Tightening the definition protects the practice and vitality of agriculture.

In our area, we have witnessed wineries turn into full blown and non- permitted wedding centers. We have seen the creation of corporate picnic venues, harvest pumpkin events (when the pumpkins are not even grown on site), and elk hunting venues “pop up” on private EFU lands. These activities generate conflicts with the practice of agriculture. We have seen urban traffic speeding on rural one-lane roads with gravel shoulders: catching a wheel on the shoulder leads to roll over accidents. Urban event traffic impeding the movement of farm machinery. Confused drivers encountering dust clouds from harvesting combines. Event noise generated in settings lacking sufficient law enforcement to intervene. Helicopters used to scare elk onto certain EFU lands for the purpose of tourism hunting. The accidental importation of

noxious weeds into grass seed croplands that require purity for markets. We encourage the **tightening of definition** to provide necessary guardrails.

State law currently recognizes and allows for homeowners to operate small businesses as accessory uses from homes located in farm and forest zones. This legislation assures that the dwelling is the residence from which the accessory use operates from.

Respectfully,

Robert Bailey, Secretary

Faun Hosey, President

[**Save Helvetia**](#)

pres@savehelvetia.org

Advancing policies, leaders and actions that protect Helvetia's treasured resources.