



[SAVE HELVETIA](#)

13260 NW Bishop Rd

Hillsboro, OR 97124

March 31, 2025

Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire

C0-Chair Helm and Owen and Committee Members

Opposition to HB 2647-3

Save Helvetia, a private non-profit advocacy organization, has been active since 2010 to protect farm and forestlands in Washington County. We organized during the Metro Urban and Rural Reserves planning process, studying lands in and around the Helvetia area, submitting testimonies to Washington County, Metro, and LCDC, eventually prevailing at the Oregon Court of Appeals. We are now affiliated with 1000 Friends of Oregon, continuing to monitor and defend land use laws and principles. Since 1843, our farmers have stewarded the land, providing us with food, beauty, and climate security.

We oppose HB 2647-3 for several reasons. The bill constitutes “legislative land use”, removing the process from local counties and LCDC that are meant to be a part of the local land use planning process.

It is restrictive of Goal 1 citizen participation intended by our land use laws. It restricts rights of appeal. While there exists a perspective that citizen involvement and rights of appeal prolong “rightful” development, in our experience this is not necessarily true. In 2010-2011, Save Helvetia testified dozens of times, during our Urban and Rural Reserves planning, to errors in Washington County’s land use processes. Had the county and Metro listened to our citizen science, they would have saved several years of development time and great expense. Following the State Court of Appeals remand in 2014, the legislature fast-tracked HB 4078, the Grand Bargain. This was promised to be a “one-time-only” legislative intrusion in the land use process – the only way Governor Kitzhaber was willing to support such a **runaround of the local process**. As a further condition of the bill, the involved jurisdictions in Washington County are prohibited from requesting more expansion until certain local conditions are met.

It's not appropriate work for the legislature. When it comes to land use, it's meant to be a **local process** to involve local expertise. It's recognized that urban planners, and legislators, do not know the details of rural lands in the way rural residents and farmers do. It's vital to give opportunities for input. Cities are, and should continue to be,

required to demonstrate the need for such expansion and develop conceptual plans for community review with alternative analyses.

Vote NO on HB 2647-3. Please reject this effort to bypass our revered Oregon land use law and process.

Respectfully,

Robert Bailey Secretary
Faun Hosey for [Save Helvetia](#)
pres@savehelvetia.org

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