

March 7, 2025

RE: Oppose SB 788

Chair Golden and committee members,

My name is Kathryn Jernstedt speaking in opposition to SB 788 on behalf of the Jernstedt Century Farm and the Jernstedt Daughters Farm in Carlton, Oregon. Please include this with the comments made at the public hearing March 6.

My father, Ernest Jernstedt Jr, credited Oregon's Land Use system with making it possible to hold the farm intact in the face of generational change and pressure from land speculators. My hope is this system will allow us to hold the farm intact for the 5th, 6th and generations now living there.

There have been innumerable highs and lows in agriculture since my great grandparents set about farming in Yamhill County in the 1880's. Crops fall in and out of favor and profitability. Families adapt and struggle through or move on. Undergirding it all is that agriculture is a business which operates with a long-term perspective. As such it needs to be adequately capitalized with a business plan based on the realities of soil, water, and market conditions.

We are seeing a marked influx of owners/buyers who are drawn to a picturesque image of rural life without understanding the complexities of farming or ranching as businesses, Oregon's Land Use system, or completing their due diligence. A specific property may not support the crop or livestock envisioned by a new buyer or subsequent operator, but that does not mean it does not have high value for appropriate crop use.

Mention was made at the hearing of amendments that could narrow the scope. The hearing and testimony were so truncated by time that there was no opportunity to learn more. The agenda and expressed interest in testifying greatly exceeded the time allowed. Also, expecting speakers to cover all three bills in a single 90 seconds was unfair.

Allowing development for non-farm events, hospitality, and entertainment purposes on EFU land is a mistake and ignores the cost and consequences of roads, water, sewer, other service needs, as well as wildlife impacts. These non-farm uses are not dependent on soil types and should be located in our cities and towns that would benefit from the investments and commercial activities within their UGBs.

There is a process for having the zoning class of a particular piece of land reevaluated. That is the appropriate course of action rather than creating another sweeping permitted non-farm use on EFU land.

No one said farming was going to be easy or even always profitable. This can be said of every business endeavor. What sets farming apart is the essential element of protecting the soil upon which it all rests. We must strengthen the protection of agriculture in EFU zones as envisioned in Oregon's 1973 Senate Bill 100. We strongly oppose further expansion of non-farm uses on EFU land anywhere in Oregon.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kathryn Jernstedt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Kathryn" on top and "Jernstedt" below it, both starting with a capital letter.

Kathryn Jernstedt
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