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GROWING STRONG

February 7, 2026

House Committee on Housing and Homelessness
Oregon Legislature

Re: Concerns Associated with HB 4035

Chair Marsh, Vice-Chair Andersen, Vice-Chair Breese-Iverson, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) and our 6,500 members from across the state, thank you for the opportunity to provide our perspective on HB 4035. OFB is the state's most inclusive agriculture organization, proudly representing family farms and ranches that produce more than 220 agricultural commodities. From hops and hazelnuts to cattle, cranberries, and timber with operations spanning from just a few acres to thousands, our members utilize all farming methods including organic, conventional, regenerative, biotech, and even no-tech.

Thank you for the important work you are doing to address Oregon's housing needs while protecting the working lands that support our rural communities and food and fiber economy. We share the general goal of protecting resource land, including the long-standing commitment in Oregon's land use system to preserve agricultural and forest lands for productive use.

We are concerned that HB 4035 does not provide sufficient, explicit protections for agricultural land as it expands the temporary process for adding land to urban growth boundaries. While the bill includes a prioritization framework that points first to urban reserves, nonresource land, and lands already subject to acknowledged exceptions, it also allows "other land" to be added when preferred categories are deemed insufficient. In practice, that opens a pathway for additional conversion pressure on farmland—particularly near growing communities—with clear statutory guardrails to prevent the loss of economically productive agricultural acreage.

OFB supports urban growth boundaries and believes it is not appropriate to lower thresholds for UGB expansion. We are especially concerned that expanding allowable acreage and broadening the pathway for UGB expansions increases the likelihood that lands in agricultural use will be considered and even encouraged when development pressures are high. Once farmland is converted, it will not be returned to production. The loss of contiguous agricultural land also creates conflicts that can undermine normal farm practices on remaining working farms. Even when those farms continue operating, the fundamental need for profitability—which is the ultimate determinant for whether the land remains protected as resource land—is undermined by additional and oftentimes burdensome operational considerations related to the unique challenges associated with the urban-rural interface.

We respectfully ask the Committee to strengthen HB 4035 by adding clear, enforceable protections for agricultural land. The bill should ensure that UGB expansions under this temporary program avoid the conversion of productive agricultural land to the greatest extent possible, and that the prioritization criteria cannot be used to justify expansion onto farmland when reasonable alternatives exist.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement for the record.

Sincerely,



Ryan J. Krabill
Oregon Farm Bureau