



Locally Grown
and
GROWING STRONG

**House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources
OFB Testimony in Support of HB 2611**

February 2, 2021

Chair Witt and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2166. By way of background, the Oregon Farm Bureau is the state's largest agricultural trade association representing nearly 7,000 farm and ranch families in the state. The fair and reasonable regulation of agricultural buildings is of immense importance to OFB's members, which is why we are supportive of HB 2611.

Under current law, agricultural buildings are supposed to be exempt from certain expensive and unsuitable structural code requirements. Unfortunately, some counties have attempted to erode this exemption by claiming that barns no longer qualify as "agricultural buildings" if they are used to store any incidental non-farm items. For example, farmers have faced losing their agricultural building status because they parked their RV in their barn or stored non-farm freight overnight. If this logic prevails, many farmers all over the state will lose their ag building exemptions because they use their barns to store personal non-farm items like volunteer fire-fighting equipment or other personal-use vehicles. This will cost farmers thousands of dollars in unwarranted building code upgrades.

We do not believe that the law was intended to be this prescriptive. Therefore, we support HB 2611 to ensure that agricultural buildings remain classified as such, so long as they are primarily used for agricultural purposes. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Samantha Bayer
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