

Submitter: Robert Emmons
On Behalf Of: LandWatch Lane County
Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3928

To: House Committee on Housing and Homelessness
From: Robert Emmons, President, LandWatch Lane County
Re: HB 3928

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

Please accept the following comments on behalf of LandWatch Lane County, a 501(c)3 non-profit that, for almost 30 years, has worked with neighbors to protect Lane County's farms, forests, natural areas and open space.

Following are a few of the reasons LandWatch Lane County opposes HB 3928:

By authorizing speculative housing construction on land outside urban growth boundaries (UGBs), including land zoned for farm and forest uses, it violates the fundamental principle of Oregon's land use program to provide compact, orderly and environmentally and ecologically sound development.

Randomly placed housing outside UGBs on farm and forest land will provide windfalls to developers that create conflicts with agricultural and forestry practices, expand infrastructure and increase traffic, increase fire risk and drive the price of land up and farmers and foresters out.

It ignores and eschews the thousands of acres and the buildings that could be repurposed within UGBs for residential development near essential services.

It will join a host of other bills intended to undermine and destroy an unprecedented land use protection program that became a model for the nation.

Here in Lane County developers, their agents and enabling politicians have routinely exploited so-called template dwellings, replacement dwellings, home occupations and other land use application pretexts and ruses to little by little, lot by lot, urbanize our rural lands and eradicate our rural economies. HB 3928 will baldly add to that transformation and corruption.

Republican Governor Tom McCall, Henry Richmond, Hector McPherson and many

other land use pioneers and their successors have devoted their lives to protecting the unique features, occupations and qualities that distinguish Oregon and continue to make our state a desirable place to live, work, recreate and revere.

Therefore, it seems to me incumbent on all of us who have benefited from their legacy to do what we can to honor it. HB 3928 dishonors and undermines the hard-won accomplishment of our land use stewards, and we urge you to deny it.

Thank you.

Robert Emmons, President
LandWatch Lane County