

Submitter: David Suttle
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2400

Dear Chair Marsh, Vice-Chair Andersen, Vice-Chair Breese-Iverson and members of the House Committee on Housing and Homelessness,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 2400, HB 2422, and HB 2316, all three of which I implore you to vote against.

As a resident of inner North East Portland, I am acutely aware of Oregon's crisis being experienced by both our unhoused citizens and those who own homes and businesses in our urban areas. As a licensed Oregon architect and a great advocate of Oregon's Land Use laws, I sincerely want to be part of the solution of finding homes for all who need them, while at the same time protecting our farmland and natural environment.

These proposed bills are an attempt to subvert protections for some of Oregon's most precious resources under the cynical guise of addressing homelessness. None of these bills would actually help the unhoused in Oregon, but would instead enable the degradation of an invaluable resource: productive agricultural land. HB 2400 is an attempt to increase housing on agricultural land that would in no way support agriculture. Taken together with HB 2422, which would bypass land use laws to increase density in rural areas, and - most egregiously - HB 2316, which would allow sprawl to spill out onto public lands, while forcing Oregonians to pay for it, these measures are an assault on one of the most significant attributes of the state: our beautiful rural land.

Agriculture is not only the second leading industry in Oregon that brings significant income to rural Oregonians; it is also an essential component of Oregon's character, and supports Oregon's reputation as uniquely beautiful and environmentally healthy state.

My spouse and I moved to Oregon after living in Austin and Boston for years. Both of those cities offered excellent employment opportunities and better salaries, but we were drawn to Oregon for the quality of life here. Having lived in other major urban areas, we could clearly see the benefits of Oregon's system of urban growth boundaries. Concentrating resources in urban areas makes even more sense in terms of supporting the unhoused population.

The costs of expanding urban infrastructure into rural areas as proposed under these Bills would divert resources away from efforts to help the most vulnerable in our communities. To successfully address the homelessness crisis, new housing must be

developed in areas that already provide supportive services and resources. Please, for the sake of Oregon's farmland and natural areas, vote NO on HB 2400, HB 2422, and HB 2316.

Thank you for your service.

David Suttle
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