



**February 7, 2024**

**Senate Committee On Housing and Development  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court St., NE  
Salem, OR 97301**

**Dear Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson and Committee Members,**

**RE: SB 1537 - Please Vote “NO” on UGB Expansions**

Friends of Marion County (FoMC) is an independent 501(c)(3) farmland protection organization founded in 1998. Our mission is to protect farm and forestland, parks, and open space in Marion County.

**FoMC OPPOSES SB 1537 BECAUSE**

1. SB 1537 is a reversal of our land use planning program which the Governor just hailed this Spring on the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of SB 100.
2. The 2023 Legislature and the Governor has already bypassed our land use laws by passing SB 70 and SB 4. These bills have a cumulative effect on our irreplaceable farmland by permitting development unrelated to farming and timber practice.
3. SB 1537 continues this strategy by allowing expansions of urban development on even more farmland, 75 or 150 acres for each and every city in the State.
4. SB 1537 actually expands the growth of urban uses since each application by a city will also include even more farmland when roads, sewer, water, and other utilities consume an additional 50% more farmland.
5. SB 1537 allows these expansions to continue for another 10 years which will hamper local planning departments from deciding where future infrastructure should go.
6. Oregon's cities have thousands and thousands of acres of vacant land that cities have designated for housing, but need infrastructure to develop. The infrastructure money in this bill, while a very good start, will not be enough for even these already-designated lands. Don't put these lands long-awaiting investment in competition with even more land, at the edge.

7. These public funds will build more housing, better-located near the things people need to get to every day, inside UGBs, where some infrastructure and schools, stores, and services already exist.
8. It has been said by the proponents that none of these urban reserves can be on to farmland - that is not true. Urban reserves consist almost entirely of land zoned for exclusive farm use. And these are NOT lands that will inevitably be urbanized - "urban reserves" is an overlay of where a UGB would expand if a need for additional land is demonstrated beyond current UGBs.

## **CONCLUSION: REJECT UGB EXPANSIONS IN SB 1537**

Thanks for listening,

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