

Friends of French Prairie

Friends of French Prairie
is an Oregon non-profit corporation

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March 3, 2021

To: House Committee on Housing

Re: Oppose House Bill 3072

Greetings;

Friends of French Prairie is a land use advocacy organization in north Marion County, and we oppose HB 3072 that would require a local government, at the request of the private landowner, to expand its UGB to include land designated as urban reserve if the property owner shows it will be used for "workforce housing" and "commercial development supportive of workforce housing,"

We oppose this bill for a number of reasons, among them:

- The design of Oregon's land use system is that an urban reserve is for additional land, if needed, for a 10-30 year period beyond the UGB, so it is available to be phased-in over time - not forced inside a UGB at the desire and timing of the land owner or developer.
- These UGB expansions can occur without any showing that the land is needed for more housing, and are driven by individual private landowners, not a public process.
- There is no definition of "commercial development supportive of workforce housing."
- A large percentage of Oregon's EFU land is "high value" and located in French Prairie, and this bill jeopardizes a lot of very good farmland.
- Perversely, this bill would take the pressure off cities to take actions to increase diverse and affordable housing options where people need and want to live, inside UGBs - near work, school, shopping, and do so at the expense of farm land.

Oregonians do need more housing – and more diverse and affordable housing types – near where they work, shop, play, and worship: inside our towns and cities.

Oregonians also benefit from agriculture as a major economic sector, and this is especially the case in Marion County. We need food and fiber, and that requires us to preserve the best land in the world for growing crops, raising cattle, and growing trees. Our soils and water are finite resources, and need to be preserved for current and future Oregonians.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Benjamin D Williams". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Benjamin" on the first line and "D Williams" on the second line.

Benjamin D Williams
Friends of French Prairie