

Submitter: Andrea VanHagen
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1522

Dear Chair Pham and Committee Members:

I am writing today to ask you to oppose SB 1522-1. Here's why I hope you will:

SB 1522-1 removes one of the key pillars of Oregon's land use system: The "prioritization scheme" that ensures a balance between accommodating urban uses and protecting the state's amazingly productive farm and forest lands. Today, if a city determines they want to designate urban reserves for possible future expansion of its urban growth boundary, the city must consider several factors and balance development and urbanization with preserving our farm and forest lands. This bill ends that balance in favor of sprawling urban areas that are worse for the climate, and make cities more difficult to live in. One only needs to travel to Phoenix, Denver, or Houston (or a dozen other western urban areas outside of Oregon) to see what sprawl does to livability and how it increases the reliance on automobiles. This type of sprawl also covers up healthy farm and forest lands, both of which help to mitigate the negative effects of climate change. This type of change also tells Oregon's farmers and stewards of the land that their work and their values don't matter as much as we have always proclaimed (and even enshrined into law).

Without the sideboards provided by this critical part of our land use system, we would see cities always expand onto farm and forest lands, rather than onto lands already planned and zoned for residential or commercial uses.

SB 1522 -1 upends many years of work recently completed by the Department of Land Conservation and Development and stakeholders resulting in the December 2025 Land Conservation and Development Commission adoption of rules implementing the Oregon Housing Needs Analysis.

Thank you for considering my comments; I hope you will say "no" to SB 1522-1.

Sincerely,

Andrea Van Hagen