

Submitter: David Gutt
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3928

Dear Representatives Marsh, Breese-Iverson, Gamba, and members of this committee. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

I am opposed to HB 3928, which would allow counties to designate an unlimited amount of rural land, outside UGBs, for sprawling residential development. This bill may benefit wealthy developers and would be landowners, but does nothing to support the homeless. The negative consequences that would result from HB 3928 are numerous and already well outlined by other people opposed to this bill. I repeat them here:

Loss of farm and forest land.

Opening new expanses of rural lands for residential development would exacerbate a trend creating unnecessary conflicts to farm and forest operators and further drive up the costs of farm and forest land, making it even more difficult for new operators to begin and for existing operators to expand.

Degradation of wildlife habitat.

Oregon's elk, mule deer, antelope, and numerous other species depend on rural land as habitat. HB 3928 aims to allow extensive development on all rural lands, including those that are protected under Goal 5, which protects natural resources, scenic and historic areas, open spaces, and wildlife habitat.

Increased wildfire risk.

Further expanding development into rural lands would unnecessarily put more Oregonians at risk of wildfire. This bill would increase both wildfire hazard and wildfire risk for rural communities. I see Farmers Insurance is already refusing to insure homeowners in some areas in Sisters....

Decreased groundwater quantity and quality.

Significantly expanding the number of dwellings on rural lands across the state will further destabilize groundwater resources and negatively impact groundwater quality.

Increases in rural sprawl and greenhouse gas emissions.

A core tenet of Oregon's visionary land use planning system is to concentrate growth within urban growth boundaries. Accommodating population growth in compact urban land use patterns reduces vehicle miles traveled and associated greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, it helps preserve rural livelihoods and productive local agricultural economies.

Please do not allow the poorly envisioned efforts of this bill to circumvent sound land use planning already in place. It's time to build vertically, not horizontally.

Please protect Oregon's cherished land use system by soundly rejecting HB 3928.

Sincerely,

David Gutt
Bend