

Submitter: Sydney Cyrus
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB77
Sydney Cyrus
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Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire Recovery Oregon State

Written Testimony in Opposition to Oregon Bill SB 77

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to Oregon Senate Bill 77, which would impose new and unnecessary restrictions on rural at-home businesses. This bill places undue burdens on small business owners by rewriting the existing home occupation statute and introducing confusing and potentially unenforceable regulations that limit the income and viability of rural businesses.

SB 77 would apply new restrictions to home occupations in all zones, including those inside urban growth boundaries, while also severely limiting the types of businesses permitted on farm and forestland. Additionally, the bill would impose restrictive advertising limitations and reduce the number of customers rural businesses can serve. These changes threaten the economic stability of rural entrepreneurs who rely on home-based businesses to supplement their income and maintain ownership of their land.

There are several key reasons why SB 77 is deeply problematic:

Harmful to Rural Small Businesses – Many rural residents rely on home occupations to sustain their livelihoods, particularly in areas where access to farm water is limited. Restricting their ability to operate businesses at home will further reduce their financial stability and make it harder for them to retain ownership of their property.

Negative Impact on Local Economies – Small, home-based businesses contribute significantly to Oregon's economy. Limiting their ability to serve customers and advertise their services will reduce revenue and job opportunities in rural areas.

Unnecessary and Unenforceable Regulations – The proposed restrictions are vague, complex, and difficult to enforce. This will create confusion for business owners and county officials alike, leading to bureaucratic inefficiencies and potential legal challenges.

Contradicts Sustainability Goals – Small farms and businesses are more sustainable than large commercial operations and tend to practice better land stewardship. Imposing additional barriers on them will push more land into the hands of large corporate farms, which prioritize profit over environmental sustainability.

Undermines Property Rights – Rural residents should have the right to utilize their property in a reasonable and responsible manner to generate income. This bill infringes on those rights and unfairly limits economic opportunities for those living in less urbanized areas.

Rather than imposing broad and restrictive regulations, the legislature should focus on policies that support rural entrepreneurs and small-scale farms. Encouraging small businesses fosters a more sustainable and diverse economy while allowing rural residents to thrive. I urge you to oppose SB 77 and instead promote legislation that strengthens, rather than stifles, rural businesses.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely, Sydney