

Good Morning, Lew:

It has been a long time since we shared the halls and culture of Irvington School, you as the parent of two delightful children and I as staff. Since my retirement from Portland Public Schools, I have returned to the "family farm" located in Yamhill County, northeast of Newberg. It is a commercial walnut producing operation owned and operated by my brother and me. In fact, we have just expanded our orchards by 30% with the planting of a new block of trees. Having spent my career working for children, I now work for dirt!

As a member of the House Committee on Land Use, I urge you to vote "No" on HB 2255. In my opinion, it is vital that we preserve farmland for future generations for the production of food. Under the guise of "industrial reserves," HB 2255 allows for the expansion of urban growth onto farmland, disregarding or weakening Oregon's current land use laws. Farmland must be protected from opportunistic industrial development. There are already provisions in law for the expansion of urbanization onto agricultural land, but only as a "last option" not the first option. Of course developers want to develop farmland. It is "shovel ready," to speak the lingo. It is also "plow ready!"

I have been involved as an opponent since 2002 to the URA/UGB expansion proposals onto prime farmland by the City of Newberg. This is a clear example of desiring farmland for industrial development, disregarding land that could be redeveloped or in-filled for that purpose. The City of Newberg has ignored land for industrial development that is already within the current URA/UGB, wishing instead to expand industrial development on farmland with EFU designation. I understand the desirability of farmland for development. But I also know that land use laws in Oregon protect farmland. I urge to to maintain this protection.

Land use law in Oregon does not prohibit urban expansion onto farmland. But cities must justify the need for such expansion. However, in my opinion, HB 2255 is an attempt to circumvent the protections afforded current land use law. There is no need for "industrial reserves." And, as I can speak from first hand knowledge and experience, farming is an industry. The land used for farming is not going to disappear as potential industrial land, if there is a justifiable need. But once farmland is paved over, it is gone forever!

Thank you for your considered vote.

Sincerely,

Grace Schaad