

April 04, 2013

Representative Clem
Chairman
House Land Use Committee
900 Court St NE H-284
Salem, Oregon 97301

House Bill 2255 Oppose

The Honorable Chairman Clem and Committee Members,

I wish that I could be there to testify today, but until my ewes are done lambing I am being the responsible shepherd. When possible I have watched most of your land use committee hearings and work sessions and if I missed some I have tried to listen to the audio recording. It is great to have such an opportunity to be involved in the "people's legislature" when you live in Central Oregon.

It seems that agriculture has been at many hearings this session telling their story. The true question is "who is listening"? You have heard the aggregate industry testify that they are only taking a "small" part of the farm ground out of production and that the real threat is urbanization to paraphrase what I heard on HB 2201 and HB2202. Then you heard from farmers saying that HB 2173 was needed to keep farm ground in production and not used as a mitigation tool as an outright use...more protection was needed by having a sub-2 use. You have heard how special bills of HB 3098 and HB 3384 were needed to pass to allow for exceptions to the land use system when DLCD staff said that the land use system has the exception process for these uses. The Governor's Natural Resource person, Richard Whitman talks about taking a look at the big picture on what all of the demands for farm ground other than farming are, yet HB 2255 came from his work group if my understanding is correct...so I must be missing something in let's take a look at the challenges that agriculture faces on demands for the farm ground other than farming.

Along comes HB 2255, which is the largest threat by any HB bill to the agriculture land base this session in my opinion. This bill is greedy beyond reason. A process already exists and it works for industrial lands. Supersiting for some business that may come if they create enough jobs...what an insult to Agriculture that is the number two job creator in Oregon. Did agriculture leave when the economy turned bad to go to another state that gave us a better deal? No! We are here and have been for centuries. How do we stay in production if the land base is continually eaten away or sold to be developed at a price that a new or even established farmer can't afford?

In our North Unit Irrigation District I have always fought very hard to protect the 58,000 plus acres that have water on them for farming. HB 2255 will open "Pandora's box" just too "maybe" entice jobs. We don't need this bill in Jefferson County or the rest of Oregon. Oregon is unique in having a land use system that wants to protect the land, yet HB2255 is disguised as a jobs bill. Last night on channel 8 during the business section they talked about how Oregon is creating jobs from the small business community that invests in Oregon and supports the local communities. Being a shepherd I understand sheep and **can tell a wolf in sheep's clothing** as the old saying goes and this shepherd sees HB2255 as just that.

I encourage you to vote no on HB2255 and as you do so remember where your food started from...not a grocery store, but from the hands of a farmer working long hours to do a good job to provide food for your family and you...it takes farm ground and farmers to feed Oregonians...**our farm ground is our industrial lands.**

Sincerely,

Mickey Killingsworth
Madras, Oregon