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February 24, 2013

Helping to shape the use of our natural resources to protect the quality of life in Yamhill County.

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House Land Use Committee  
State Capitol, Room 347  
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 2201 & 2202

Dear Chair Clem and Committee members:

Friends of Yamhill County (FYC) works to protect natural resources through the implementation of land use planning goals, policies, and laws that maintain and improve the present and future quality of life in Yamhill County. Our members include farmers, foresters, vintners, and many other urban and rural residents. We strongly support HB 2201 and 2202.

According to a recent report from the Oregon Employment Department (copy attached) agriculture is the largest traded sector in the Region 3 economy (Marion, Polk, & Yamhill counties). Agriculture accounts for 23.3% of the total employment (direct and indirect) in the Region.

Many of us have spent years fighting bad proposals that have ruined prime Willamette Valley farmland with gravel mines. We have nearly 100 century farms in Yamhill County alone that have operated in the same family for 100+ years. No other industry in the Willamette Valley can compare to that number of sustainable on-going businesses.

It makes no sense to squander an industry that can be sustained for many, many generations for a one-time harvest of gravel. HB 2201 and 2202 finally protect prime farmland from unnecessary loss to aggregate extraction.

We urge passage of these bills.

Sincerely,

Sid Friedman  
Friends of Yamhill County

Attachment: *Agriculture in Marion, Polk and Yamhill Counties*, (Oregon Employment Department)