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February 16, 2015

Senator Chris Edwards, Chair
Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee
State Capitol
Salem, OR

Re: SB 210

1000 Friends of Oregon is a 40-year old, non-profit, statewide organization. We advocate for livable urban and rural communities, protecting family farms and forests, and conserving natural areas, largely through the implementation and improvement of Oregon's land use planning program.

1000 Friends opposes SB 210. Senate Bill 210 would establish a mechanism for those who are able to pay more to move to the front of the line with a fast-track process for certain permits and land use decisions. It requires state agencies and local governments to complete their work within 120 days, even if more time is necessary to obtain public input and fully vet the proposal.

Our testimony will focus on the land use aspects of this bill. SB 210 provides this "pay for the fast track" benefit for land use plan *amendments*. These are *not* individual permits to develop an individual piece of land. The land use process *already* provides a 120-day fast track for all city land use permits, and 150 days for county permits, at no extra cost. In these cases, the timeframe makes sense, because the land is already planned for a certain type of development – for example, commercial, and the permit application is for that use at that location and is therefore much simpler to evaluate. However, SB 210 would apply that fast track to a different type of land use decision - plan amendments.

Typically, cities and counties go through a public process to gather extensive community input to eventually determine which broad areas of land should be planned for certain types of development – such as residential, industrial, parks, commercial, institutional uses, etc.... This community process takes into account things like transportation systems in the community and locations of schools and parks in determining what areas are appropriate for what types and densities of uses. This bill would allow a single person or developer to request to change that – and force a community, in 120 days, to determine whether a plan designation that might have taken a year to come to a consensus on should be changed. And, this fast-track privilege would go only to those with enough money to pay whatever the fast-track fee is. So, for example, an entire area that had been planned for industrial use to take advantage of its location near key transportation routes could find itself with a request to be re-designated as a commercial retail, big box center.

All the other agencies and governments that would likely have to also evaluate this scale of change – transportation agencies, school districts, and more – would be forced into the same 120-day time period. This is an unrealistic framework for making good decisions; it is unfair to public processes that developed our communities' plans; and it gives an advantage to the few

with the resources to afford this over the many others who will have to live with the consequences.

We ask you to not recommend passage of SB 210. Thank you for consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Kyle McCurdy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "M" at the beginning.

Mary Kyle McCurdy
Policy Director and Staff Attorney