

From: Carla Mikkelson [<mailto:carlamikke@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Monday, April 06, 2015 1:39 AM
To: Reiley Beth
Subject: No on SB 716

Hi, Beth. Please include the following comments in the hearing packets for the 3:00 pm meeting. I would appreciate it. I hope you are still doing well!

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on SB 716 and I urge the Committee Members to vote no.

I grew up on a farm in Woodburn and continue to live on that farm. I am also a member of the Marion County Planning Commission, although the opinions here are my own and in no way represent the Commission.

SB 716 adds unnecessary confusion to land use law which benefits no one but a few land owners who speculated on EFU zoned property and did not like the results of the rural/urban reserves process in the Metro counties.

1. There is plenty of land within the UGB in Metro and in other counties in the Willamette Valley. Metro has over 7,000 acres zoned for industry; Salem has the Mill Creek industrial area just waiting for investors; Albany, Corvallis, and Eugene-Springfield all have large areas of industrial land available. This bill is completely unnecessary for industrial and other economic development.
2. There was a process within Metro, involving governments, organizations, and citizens, to determine the urban/rural reserves. These processes are designed to be inclusive of interests and as much as possible use objective criteria to determine the best uses for land and other resources necessary for development. Compromises are made but they are determined in a transparent, public process. SB 716 completely undermines this process, undermines the criteria used to determine the reserves, and insults citizen participants by allowing a few unhappy landowners to circumvent the entire process.
3. Marion County is significantly affected by this bill. Marion County is Oregon's number one agricultural producer. For decades we have been fighting to keep metropolitan development north of the Willamette River in order to protect the Class I farmlands in French Prairie, even though a significant number of acres are in Clackamas County. In fact, it was the Charbonneau Development on Class I farm land in the 1960's which prompted Sen. Hector McPherson, Governor Tom McCall, and others to establish the land use system in Oregon. It would indeed be a shame to pass SB 716 and once again have the potential to lose farmland as valuable as French Prairie's.
4. All agricultural land is not the same. The urban/rural reserves process identified high value farm land. Just saying that any land used for development will be replaced by an equal number of acres shows an abysmal ignorance of soil. One of the reasons Class I

and Class II farm lands are so valuable is that there isn't a lot of it. It would not be easy to find equivalent land for a "trade" even if this were a good idea. And it should be pointed out that agriculture is an industry and therefore farm land is "industrial" land. There are some developers who can't look at an open field without envisioning buildings on it. They do not understand that farm land is developed. Often the land has been tilled to aid drainage, has had underground water pipes laid, soil amendments added to improve fertility, and other infrastructure which is not immediately visible but significantly improves productivity and therefore profitability. Some of these improvements can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars and farmers will not make these investments if they are not certain about the long-term future of the land.

5. It is not the responsibility of the public to insure that all real estate speculation is profitable. Sometimes speculation pays and sometimes it does not. I think that's why they call it "speculation". But trying to circumvent the decisions of an inclusive, transparent, public process is bad policy and such efforts should be resisted.

6. There are many other bad aspects to this bill, but I will only discuss one more. Land south of the river and zoned EFU has already been purchased by real estate speculators who attempted to get the zoning changed to industrial. The Oregon Court of Appeals rejected every claim and denied the change.

So, please protect the public and vote no on SB 716.

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