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To: <Beth.Reiley@state.or.us>
Subject: Testimony In Opposition to SB 748

This communication provides testimony and comments in opposition to SB 748.

Let me say at the outset that I have no financial or economic interest in the outcome. I am writing because this bill erodes the principles upon which Oregon's land use policies are based.

What right do I have as a resident of Marion County, who neither farms nor does business, to question the wisdom of counties seeking to alleviate poverty and high unemployment?

To pose the question makes an assumption about counties that counties do not deserve. I have followed Oregon's land use history since SB 100. I follow county issues and I have endured the exasperation of people who think we who live in "The Ditch" need to butt out of the affairs of rural Oregon.

Such criticism infers that counties are to Oregon as Oregon is to the United States. Nothing could be more false. Counties are largely administrative districts of the state, able to act only compliance with the state and with state law.

My family roots go back five generation and there are two generations behind me ready to stand up for what it means to be an Oregonian. My roots can be found in Lane, Union, and Marion counties. When anyone asks, though: I am an Oregonian.

And as an Oregonian my interests are for the state as a whole. Being an Oregonian does not mean that counties can ignore or thwart the state of which they are a part.

The bill sets thresholds that are ludicrous. It permits undefined local governments to unilaterally ("a finding by the local government") determine a need exists with no safeguards or penalties if the outcome fails to comply with the exemption. Metaphors about toothpaste come to mind.

The Bill uses poverty definitions that are not county-specific.

The Bill sets no criteria on what kinds of jobs are contemplated or the duration of the jobs.

There is no baseline defining, for example, "sustained high unemployment," other than to use a definition requiring the rate to exceed 7% for 24 consecutive months. When do you measure the 24 months? Is it the first eight of the last nine completed calendar quarters preceding the request for an exemption? It is unclear what this means. What it does mean is that Oregon, as a state has experienced sustained high unemployment for six years, but that rate is falling faster than the national average - without this bill.

This bill seeks to use the traumatic unemployment Oregon has sustained since 2008 and use it, not to create an educational and vocational infrastructure that would permit Oregon as a state to withstand another Great Recession, but to exploit the misfortunes of Oregonians to rend the

fabric of what makes Oregon a place people want to come to, to live, and to work. In return for rending that fabric what do we get: ten or more new full time jobs, for which neither “new” nor “full time” is adequately defined.

We do not need this bill in addition to the already enacted SB 611.

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