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House Committee on Rural Communities, Land Use and Water

RE: HB 2666

I am a farm and forest landowner in Polk County, raised on a farm in the Willamette Valley and from a family dating back to the wagon train of 1845. Oregon is "God's Country" if you will. There is nowhere I'd rather live. And more and more people are thinking the same. I met my first "climate refugee" a couple of weeks ago and I'm afraid there will be many more as California runs out of water and fracking and drought ruin farmland and make life less attractive in other parts of the country.

Oregon's land use laws have done a reasonably good job of protecting our farmland over the last decades but there are always more cracks and loopholes in these laws and HB 2666 would be one more big one. There will be NO MORE fine farmland. What we have now is what we have regardless of how many people come to Oregon or how many inhabit the earth. Every acre we convert to gravel pits is gone forever. The food products we can grow on this land can and will feed Oregonians and any that is left over will always be infinitely exportable – permanently good for the economy and jobs – and doesn't quit producing or ruin the land like a rock pit. Protecting our farmland, all of it, but especially the good river bottom land is the absolutely best investment we can make in Oregon's future. HB 2666 is a very bad idea and I urge you to reject it.

Thank you.