



East Metro  
Economic  
Alliance

April 23, 2015

The Honorable Phil Barnhart, Chair House Committee on Revenue

Dear Chair Barnhart and Committee Members:

East Metro Economic Alliance (EMEA) writes to extend our support for House Bill 2652, which would correct a longstanding error in the legislation governing the Strategic Investment Program.

EMEA is dedicated to creating a community of prosperity and economic opportunity in East County and will advocate for policies which promote that goal. The Strategic Investment Program is a critical statewide economic development tool that helps Oregon be competitive in attracting major traded-sector employers to our state. It is an important tool for East County, which has available industrial lands which could easily accommodate large traded sector employers.

Unfortunately, the current statute does not always provide for a fair and even playing field when it comes to the ability to compete for investments on the regional level. The current statute rightly contains a lower cap for rural properties. But, the statute definition of "rural" land is not based on whether it exists within the current Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), but on whether or not it did when the statute became effective in 2002. That means some land parcels, now well within the UGB, are able to offer a lower cap for property tax purposes than urban land in our area of the region. That is both unfair and unnecessary, and we support an even playing field for all urban land in the region.

Thank you for your consideration of our viewpoint on the issue.

Sincerely,

Kathy Clevenger  
EMEA Legislative Committee Chair

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