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Testimony in Opposition to SB 534 House Rural Communities, Land Use and Water Committee

Chair Clem, Members of the Committee:

Friends of Family Farmers urges your opposition to SB 534, a bill to authorize a city to provide urban water and sewage services to an airport outside the city's boundaries, without going through the normal processes for such development activities.

While statewide in scope, it appears this bill is intended to tip the scales on a specific land use controversy in Clackamas and Marion Counties related to the impacts of development at the Aurora Airport on surrounding farms. While the land use systems provides ways for cities to provide water and sewage services to areas currently outside of urban growth boundaries if a need can be shown, it appears that none of these processes have taken place in the case of the Aurora Airport.

This bill continues a troubling trend of individuals or singular entities asking the Legislature to intervene in order to supersite controversial development activities with significant impacts on farmland or natural resource values.

In regard to the Aurora Airport, it is located adjacent to some of Oregon's most important and productive high value working exclusive farm use (EFU) land. We believe that SB 534, if passed without amendments, will ultimately trigger significant development pressures that lead to the irreversible loss of this farmland as the airport and related development grows in response to the passage of the bill.

For the above reasons, we urge your opposition to SB 534.