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June 3, 2015

Senate Committee on Business and Transportation  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Opposition to HB 3212/HB 2666-A or "GUT AND STUFF"

Dear Chair Beyer and Members of the Committee:

Our organization and its individual members are neutral on the current wording of HB 3212. Our concern with this bill is that we have heard an effort is being made by the aggregate lobby to gut and stuff the concepts of HB 2666-A into HB 3212.

We are totally against HB 2666-A and do not want any of the concepts in HB 2666-A stuffed into HB 3212 or any other bill. HB 2666-A needs to die.

Friends of Marion County is a 501(c)3 farmland protection organization founded in 1998. Our mission is to protect farm and forestland, parks, and open space.

There are several reasons we oppose HB 2666-A. We will list a few.

1. HB 2666-A prevents affected citizens from rendering testimony unless they own property surrounding the proposed mine. No longer can citizens voice concerns about transportation to and from the mine that would adversely affect their own farming operations. Remember, gravel mines generate a great deal of year around heavy truck traffic. This bill will take the land out of the base of Oregon's #2 *industry* – agriculture.

2. The mining industry claims that only ½ of 1% of Willamette Valley farmland has been used for aggregate mining. The Willamette Valley extends from Portland to Eugene, about 150 mi, long and 30 mi. wide. Please don't be fooled that this is a mere trifle. This amounts to 14,400 ac. or approx. ½ the size of the City of Salem. This is a huge amount of farmland consumed which can never be remediated to agricultural use.

3. HB 2666-A essentially stipulates that surrounding farm property owners must show that they are unable to undertake any farm practice. Thus farm property owners may find the investment in their current practice may be lost.

HB 2666-A takes irreplaceable farm land out of production. With the ongoing drought conditions, we need to preserve every acre of farmland possible.

HB 2666-A is ill conceived and a real threat to Oregon's landscape. We therefore ask that you do not accept any amendments with the concepts of HB 2666-A for inclusion in HB 3212 or any other piece of pending legislation.

Thank you for your consideration.

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