



P.O Box 1083  
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January 31, 2016

Helping to shape the use of our natural resources to protect the quality of life in Yamhill County.

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Senator Sara Gelser, Chair  
Senate Committee on Human Services & Early Childhood

Re: SB 1575

Senator Gelser;

Friends of Yamhill County (FYC) works to protect natural resources through the implementation of land use planning goals, policies, and laws that maintain and improve the present and future quality of life in Yamhill County for both urban and rural residents. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the above referenced docket.

SB 1575 addresses issues related to affordable housing. Some of its provisions would have a significant and negative impact on farm, forest, and resource lands and on the fundamental concept of urban growth boundaries, a cornerstone of Oregon's land use laws.

Currently cities are required to have a 20 year supply of land, available for all uses. If they do not have a 20 year supply they may expand their UGB upon showing need for more urban land. SB 1575 would allow a city to expand its UGB at will, without showing need, regardless of the availability of a 20 year reserve. Worse, there would be no apparent limit on the amount of land included in the expansion and a carte blanche to ignore existing law that mandates that highest quality farmland be the lowest priority for inclusion.

It is difficult to believe that the solution to our affordable housing issues is to expand our UGB's. Extending a city's infrastructure to outlying areas is expensive and time consuming. The burden of these costs will surely impact the affordability of the new homes built there.

While SB 1575 appears to offer a solution to affordable housing needs, we believe it does not provide a real solution to affordable housing and in fact is a brazen attempt to dismantle Oregon's land use laws. We urge you to kill this bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

//s//

Tom Abrego  
Friends of Yamhill County

cc: Senate President Peter Courtney