

Dear Chairman Senator Geiser (Committee on Human Services and Early Childhood),

While I understand that there is a need for more affordable housing, those needing such housing need to be close into towns where people using affordable housing can either walk to their jobs and grocery shopping in or near downtowns, or have adequate bus service. Expanding the UGB and wrecking our wonderful land use system and inviting sprawl is far from the best answer for the affordable housing need.

Even the elderly need to be in closer to city services, medical resources, home health workers, shopping, etc.

The sprawl that would likely be created with this bill would increase traffic issues, create needs for more expansion of city services at cost to cities, and there would be no guarantees that developers would create enough affordable housing to significantly meet the needs. Farm land would be put at risk when a better place for affordable housing is in closer-in parts of the city where people can access city resources. There are areas in cities where possible re-zoning or other encouragement to developers could incentivize developers to create more affordable housing in the right places where such housing would not create sprawl or harm farm or forest land.

The infrastructure to develop raw land would require time to build pipes and roads, which would increase the cost of the housing created. More affordable housing could be created more inexpensively in areas of cities where such infrastructure was already available and developed. Cities should be required to make such use of these areas and to seek any UGB expansion via the current, effective land use program.

SB 1575 would allow any city to expand its UGB without showing a real need or effective use of the land already in their boundary. The current land use system is better set up to determine expansion needs. Under SB 1575 developers could abuse any expansion they were allowed, by seeking way more land than they need, using only a small percentage for affordable housing while using the rest for large, expensive homes.

This bill is a bad idea, and should not be snuck through this short session of the legislature in this committee.

Sincerely ,

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