



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF OREGON**

February 1, 2016

To: Senate Committee on Business and Transportation  
Senator Lee Beyer, Chair  
Sen. Fred Girod, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee  
Email to: [sbt.exhibits@state.or.us](mailto:sbt.exhibits@state.or.us)

Re: SB 1588, Allowing Rural Counties NOT to Comply with State Land Use Goals--**OPPOSE**

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan, grassroots political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. The League supports our state land use planning program with local implementation. Land use planning is about where people live, work, play, shop and how they get there. It's also about the economy of our state and local areas.

There are eight counties which would be allowed to “opt out” of our land use planning program under this bill—a program that has preserved their agricultural lands to the benefit of the residents of these counties for the past 40 years. **Agriculture IS the economic engine of Eastern Oregon.** From cattle to hay to wheat to potatoes to a variety of other crops on to processing those commodities, the land base supporting agriculture is critical to the lifeblood of these citizens. (See attached December 2015 report from OSU: [http://agsci.oregonstate.edu/sites/agsci.oregonstate.edu/files/oregon\\_agriculture\\_2015.pdf](http://agsci.oregonstate.edu/sites/agsci.oregonstate.edu/files/oregon_agriculture_2015.pdf) . “Table 12 indicates that \$8.191 billion in total sales in Oregon is associated with the direct sales of \$5.672 billion from agricultural production reported in Table 11.”) We/they cannot afford to see that land squandered by speculative decisions.

Under the findings on page 1, lines 22 and 23, of SB 1588, we notice a most telling error statement. Business development DOES require “urban” services such as city water, sewer and other public utilities, adequate and well-maintained roads, as well as services expected by their employees, such as public safety and good schools near where they live.

In developing new rules around expansion of urban growth boundaries, research has noted that cities and towns in “rural” Oregon are really the same as those located in “urban” Oregon as related to their form and function. There is a misunderstanding of those terms related to land use. People can be located in what is considered “rural Oregon”, yet the services they require for a successful city or town within that broader geographic region are the same services needed by cities and towns in other parts of the state. The same is true of businesses no matter where they locate.

Allowing sprawling subdivisions in the middle of our important agriculture land not only creates a burden on public services, but sets up inherent conflicts of land usage as our farmers and ranchers go about the business of growing crops or raising cattle.

We ask that you carefully consider the benefits that our land use system provides to Eastern Oregon and not move this bill forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Norman Turrill".

Norman Turrill  
President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peggy Lynch".

Peggy Lynch  
Natural Resources Coordinator