

As a resident of Deschutes County, I strongly urge you to reject HB2893, which "Requires city to evaluate for inclusion in urban growth boundary agricultural land consisting predominantly of certain soil classifications with other first priority soils."

This provision is grossly in error, as it incorrectly deals with Class VI soils. Current law makes an important distinction between irrigated Class VI soils and non-irrigated Class VI soils. This distinction is crucial to Oregon's agriculture future.

The law currently states that irrigated Class VI soils are to be treated as Class III soils. In Central and Eastern Oregon, Class III soils are prime farmland. We cannot afford to lose that farmland to development, which destroys its agricultural potential forever. Even if Class VI farmland is not currently irrigated, if it has ever been irrigated, it could be so treated again and should be preserved for future agricultural needs.

This bill would lead to a situation in which cities would be allowed to treat high value irrigated farm lands as the equivalent of non-resource lands for purposes of expanding the urban growth boundary. Cities need to expand, but they need to avoid eating up prime agricultural land as they do so. Indeed, this has been a key to Oregon's successful agricultural industry as well as Oregon's intelligent growth.

So I urge you, please vote no on HB2893.

Thank you,

Eva Eagle
Sisters, OR 97759