

HB2894 creates a dangerous precedent, by allowing cities to bypass well-established and valuable land use laws to promote urban sprawl at the expense of high value irrigated farm and ranch lands outside the UGB.

It would allow cities free rein to bring any land into the UGB by simply "calculating" that infill using available land inside the UGB would be more expensive than destroying prime farmland. As a PhD economist who worked for years analyzing the costs and benefits of development, I can assure you that such calculations are never entirely objective -- in part because cities (along with their developers) will inevitably inflate the costs of infill and discount the longterm costs of losing land that underpins Oregon's economy and quality of life.

It would permit cities to allow available infill land to sit idle while allowing developers to bring in whatever land they want or already own. Oregon has in place a tried and tested process to allow UGB expansion. This bill not only undermines this process, but destroys its very purpose. Anyone committed to intelligent growth should vote no on HB2894.

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