

March 13, 2017

House Committee on Human Services and Housing
State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

RE: HB 2937 and HB 2938

Dear Chair Keny-Guyer and Committee Members:

My wife and I farm 170 acres in Yamhill County. We are strongly opposed to HB 2937 and HB 2938, especially the provisions that apply to EFU zones. EFU zones are not residential zones. They are industrial zones that protect the state's #2 industry-agriculture. In 2008, there were already an average of 3 house for every farm in the Willamette Valley. Then Measure 49, which replaced Measure 37, allowed thousands more.

This proliferation of non-farm dwellings in farm zones makes it much more difficult to actually farm. They complain when plowing kicks up dust. Their dogs chase my friend's sheep.

Enough is enough. Why anyone would propose allowing every single lot or parcel in our industrial farm zones to build another house to rent out to anyone, whether for long-term or short-term, is beyond me. Most farms, including ours, have multiple parcels-which under this bill means multiple additional dwellings or residential RV's. Some parcels in farm zones are a 1-acre lavender patch or not in farm use at all but under this bill they get another dwelling, too.

And the bill utterly fails to recognize that many parts of the Willamette Valley have limited ground water. These additional domestic water withdrawals may or may not come from existing wells, but they are still additional withdrawals. Even if these new dwellings are allowed in rural residential zones, they should absolutely not be allowed in groundwater-limited areas because they will hurt all of us, whether we farm or not.

I also thought we were trying to reduce our greenhouse gas output. These thousands of new residences won't be served by transit and won't be in walkable neighborhoods. In short, they'll make a mockery of our lip service to combating climate change.

There's a reason we have Urban Growth Boundaries. They have served us well. The many thousands of new residences these bills would authorize belong in our cities and towns where adequate infrastructure and services are in place, not in our countryside.

Please vote no on HB 2937 and 2938.

Sincerely,

Sid Friedman