

Rosenberg Corey

From: cinbah@spiritone.com
Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 8:50 AM
To: SHS Exhibits
Cc: Sen. BetsyJohnson@state.or.us; rep.bradwitt@state.or.us
Subject: SB 1024-Public Comment

Dear Madam Chair and Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services:

It has come to our attention that there are several bills, including SB 1024, attempting to expand the number of dwellings permitted on MUA, EFU and/or Rural Residential lands. We strongly oppose additional dwellings, ADU's and/or RVs, on rurally designated lands. The reason Oregon continues to have open spaces, farmland, forests, and wildlife habitat is due to a strong commitment to the protection of these lands. SB 1024, if we understand it correctly, seeks to double the density of dwellings in rural residential zones, which includes MUA lands.

Doubling the density of rural residences, doubles vehicles, structures, population, and demand for services in areas that have been historically protected in order to preserve farmland, forests, habitat, soil and water resources and open spaces in the State of Oregon. Housing for farm help is already allowed. Temporary hardship dwellings for ill and disabled family members is also allowed. Renting out a room or rooms, within a residence, to our knowledge, is also allowed – either long term, or as a home occupation for certain types of shorter term rentals.

The need for more affordable housing in the Portland Metro area is apparent – but the solution to that is not to go into Rural Reserve areas, EFU, MUA and Forest areas – and double or triple the density – by adding additional permanent ADU and RV dwellings. Homeowners can rent out a room – or their entire home – as affordably as they wish – under the current law. What they may not do, is add additional structures or convert structures into permanent dwellings – or use RVs to become apartments for long term renters or a place to stay while they rent out their home for high nightly profit

We live on Sauvie Island on MUA property, adjacent to EFU farmland. In the last year, we watched the Air BnB list for Sauvie Island grow from 1 or 2 to 16. These enterprises were not creating “affordable housing” but nightly profit from mini-home hotels ranging from \$150-\$450 per night in unlawful ADU's.

Doubling the density of population and structures would increase demand on infrastructure, aquifers, services and increase potential conflicts between landowners – those trying to farm, tend forests, raise livestock, restore habitat. SB 1024 goes entirely against the historic long range planning for the area.

Seasonal vehicle traffic (not including bicycles) has been documented between 750,000 and a million visitors per year on Sauvie Island. Allowing additional residences would more than double the daily vehicular residential traffic year round, more than double demand on wells and aquifers – and create a type of sprawl that will change the face of rural Oregon – without providing the affordable housing relief these types of bills claim to want to provide. Instead, they will likely create nightly hotel income – with no oversight – and create burden and conflicts for farmers and neighbors who are actually trying to be careful stewards of precious land and water resources.

Recently, a neighbor (on MUA land) converted a structure that had been a large storage building into an Air BnB – and began to rent it out nightly. They were aware the structure could not be used as a dwelling. All of a sudden we began to see 1-3 cars roll in nightly – strangers walking on farmland (not their own land) behind our property – noise, loud music, etc. We suspected that they had begun to use it as an Air BnB – went on a website – found that to be true. We talked with them – registered our concerns – to no avail, until we went to Multnomah County and requested that they enforce the law. Even then, the behavior did not change until a financial fine was assessed. This had nothing to do with affordable housing whatsoever.

The Land Use Laws of this State and Multnomah County – have allowed there to be viable farmland close-in to urban areas, allowed there to be forests and wildlife areas to experience, and have kept a type of sprawl from occurring that can be seen across this nation. We value and treasure the immense thought, care and work that has gone into trying to keep Oregon and Portland livable and desirable. To allow the double and tripling of density in rural areas goes in the wrong direction. We strongly oppose SB1024 – and instead suggest that affordable housing issues be addressed in areas designated as Urban Reserves and within the Urban Growth Boundaries.

We urge you to use other methods to address the need for affordable housing rather than ruin rural properties and the unique character and irreplaceable farmland, resources and habitat they provide.

Sincerely,

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