

April, 3<sup>rd</sup>,2017

Subject: HB 3050 Committee Hearing Scheduled for April 4<sup>th</sup>,2017

I will be unable to attend the upcoming hearing on this bill and would offer input for Blue Mountain Alliance of Milton Freewater Oregon, for HB 3050. I am requesting that the following input be entered in the record for the committee hearing.

The purpose of the proposed bill would change the land Use permitting process for High Value Farm Lands and would allow the siting of Solar projects on these lands if suitable alternate Non high value lands are not available for Solar development.

EFU-AVA-High Value Farm Lands were designated through the LCDDC planning process more than 30 years ago. Subsequently a process for determining non Farm uses on these lands has been in place for many years. The process has worked satisfactorily many times, and requires a "Goal 3 exception process", which is done by local Planning Commissions, Board of Commissioners, or other designated Local Authority. The process works and does not need the proposed changes in 3050. The objective of the High Value Farm Land designation is to preserve our Farm Lands for the future. HB 3050 does not meet that objective.

The effects of HB 3050 revolve around the changes relating to the Lack of lands designated other than high value for Solar development. To understand the impact that the proposed changes in HB3050 would have on High Value Farm Lands, one would have to understand the selection criteria for lands suitable for solar development. Suitable lands would have to be relatively flat terrain; requires reasonable access; and close proximity to the power grid. The question then becomes where are the majority of these lands? It is most commonly referred to as the "Columbia Corridor". This Corridor also contains some of the most Productive farm lands in the State. This Bill would place a significant threat on our high value farm lands. The potential impacts are very large.

The Bill refers to "Cost" as it relates to the suitability of alternate available lands for Solar Development. While it is understood that the Cost of the development for a project is economically driven to attain project viability, there is no mention of the "Costs" associated with the loss of High Value Farm land due to Solar development. How much is the loss of these lands in the "Big Picture", how does this affect the objective of High Value Farm lands? This is ignored in the Bill.

In summary, HB 3050 is a "Bad Bill" and should not move forward. The existing process is adequate and working, Non Farm uses should go through the Exception Process and be decided at the local level. HB 3050 as proposed will have a major impact on our High Value Lands and does not meet the objective of preserving our High Value Farm Lands for the future. To allow a process such as proposed here goes totally against the original purpose and need of our Land Use Planning process.

Blue Mountain Alliance does not support this Bill, and neither should you.

Dave Price, For Blue Mountain Alliance

