



ORCA: Oregon Coast Alliance
Protecting the Oregon Coast

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April 5, 2017

Oregon Legislature
Oregon State Capitol
House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 2937 & HB 2938

Via email: hagr.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

Dear Chair Clem and Members of the Committee,

Oregon Coast Alliance (ORCA) is an Oregon nonprofit whose mission is to protect coastal natural resources and aid in community livability. We write you today concerning HB 2937 and HB 2938.

ORCA **opposes** HB 2937 and 2938, which (among other things) allow nonfarm dwellings on Exclusive Farm Use (EFU) land and Rural Residential exception areas.

These bills may appear to be addressing housing affordability, but they do not. They are rural land use bills that seek to expand nonfarm dwelling opportunities on farmland, among other provisions.

Allowing Additional Dwelling Units (ADUs) on Exclusive Farm Use lands, which HB 2937 does, will simply add to farmers' burdens as they try to make a living from farming. The coast is a region of diverse farm operations, ranging from dairy operations in Tillamook County to organic cranberry farms in Coos County and cattle ranching in Curry County. HB 2937 will result in more short-term rentals on farmland, which increases the problems farmers face. Farmland is not a vacation destination, it is lands being worked to provide our food supply.

The coast has many problems already with short-term rentals; it is an explosive issue in nearly all coastal towns. Lincoln City is a prime example, in which short-term rentals are crowding out neighborhoods and affordable housing options. This problem should not be added to the coastal region's farmland as well. HB 2937 has no limitations requiring a new dwelling to be attached to an existing house, the lot size, location or

ownership. It just permits a new residential dwelling on farmland and rural exception lands.

HB 2938 will allow RVs on Exclusive Farm Use lands – in other words, they add another new type of dwelling on farmland. If the integrity of farming operations is to be maintained, it is essential that nonfarm dwellings be limited as much as possible.

Affordable housing should be addressed in Oregon; but affordable housing is a problem that should be dealt with in urban areas, where services are available for building lower cost housing. Affordable housing is an especially serious problem in coastal towns, where vacation rentals and high land costs frequently make affordable housing impossible to find. But this longstanding problem cannot be dealt with via these two bills, which do not address affordable housing at all, even in rural areas.

Please keep farmland for farming operations, not for vacation dwellings and other residential opportunities. The land use laws' purpose, among others, is to protect the integrity of farmland, because we all depend on it. These bills would do the opposite. Please do not pass these bills from the Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Please place this testimony into the record for this measure.

Sincerely,

/s/ Cameron La Follette

Cameron La Follette