

Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

Exhibit submission for Senate Bill 186 hearing on April 13, 2017.

Dear committee members,

I am writing to enter public testimony in support of SB 186. Being out of town has made it impossible for me to be present in person.

My family and I own a parcel of land which borders NW Jackson School Road and Meek Road less than a quarter mile South of Hwy 26 in Hillsboro. We are trying to farm on a land parcel that has 15,460 cars up and down our road per day. This is equivalent to a major artery into Hillsboro and yet we are still considered rural. The count is almost double what it was 10 years ago. This area of land, bordered by the Urban Growth Boundary on 2 sides (Jackson East Project and North Hillsboro Industrial Renewal Project), Highway 26 to the North, and the artery that is NW Jackson School Rd to the West, is locked by urban use.

SB 186 fixes the enormous oversight and lack of long-term planning that after years of study and community involvement, and over the course of a weekend, was taken out of the Urban Reserve as part of the Grand Bargain. Without proper citizen representation, a small group of individuals drew arbitrary lines, bypassed the proper remand process with Metro, and made backroom decisions effecting long range planning for the next 50 years.

As a matter of fact, very few farms in Northwest Hillsboro are used to grow food, and aside from our blueberries, the land around us is used for grass seed and clover. Additionally, better farmland is being developed just north of us because of the limited amount of land available in the Metro Urban Growth Boundary. This does not support the regions desire to protect farmland as the growth is simply being pushed right across from Hillsboro onto even better farm land. It also has created safety issues for the community, especially when we need to pull out of our driveway with 6,000 pounds of blueberries 15 times a day.

There are a few opponents to SB 186, all of which have flawed logic and I encourage you to look at their arguments with skepticism. First, Save Helvetia has written a letter asking for you to oppose SB 186. This bill does not return any land North of the Sunset to Urban Reserve. Second, 1,000 Friends is standing by false information that our land is irrigated, and touting us as "greedy landowners" when in fact this bill does nothing by way of developing or even allowing landowners to sell their land as Urban Growth. The ONLY thing SB 186 does in North Hillsboro, is revert back to the Urban Reserve boundary established by Metro that allows the land to be *considered* as a *possibility* during the next 50 years.

Farms should be protected, but squeezing people out of the ability to be part of the input process and effecting their livelihood and quality of life without representation is not acceptable. To reiterate, SB 186 Urban Reserves would NOT go North of the Sunset Highway, would allow for a natural boundary, would create safety for our community and would allow good farmland to stay farmland. It would only put this land into a reserve, a bank of land that could be reviewed at a later time if warranted.

Thank you,
Cindy and Chris Hodges
6770 NW Jackson School Rd, Hillsboro OR 97124