

From: Dave and Ellen Vanasche
To: [SENR Exhibits](#)
Subject: SB 186S
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Senate Committee on Environment & Natural Resources

April 12, 2017

Senator Michael Dembrow: Chairman

Dear Senator Dembrow and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing my testimony before your committee today. My name is Dave Vanasche and I reside at 36130 NW Wren Road, Cornelius, Oregon 97113.

I strongly oppose SB 186S. My family owns and operates Vanasche Farm (Century Farm 1896) in western Washington County; our farm consists of 2400 acres (841 acres owned and 1560 acres leased) of high value farmland. We grow proprietary grass seed, clover seed, wheat and hazelnuts.

Our farm headquarters is about three miles west of the north Hillsboro 1800 acre SB186 site.

I am a conservationist and I have dedicated my life to the protection of farm and forest land in Oregon for the production of food and fiber, for present and future generations of Oregonians. Senate Bill 100 and Statewide Land Use Planning have allowed farms like ours to flourish adjacent to cities, like the Portland- metro area.

The Willamette Valley, including Washington County, which is predominately made up of large blocks of high value farmland, is an agricultural mecca, growing more than 200 different crops, with a mild intercoastal climate and normally 35" - 40" of rainfall per year. We are the grass and legume (clover) seed capital of the world. Our mild winters and dry summers create a successful growing and harvest cycle.

Metro's "Big Look" was created in order to stabilize land use planning in the Portland metro area, by creating a stable 50 year supply of urban land and a 50 year supply of rural land. This would allow farmers to make long term plans for crops such as hazelnuts and infrastructure, such as grass seed cleaning plants. I was a volunteer representing agriculture on Metro's rule making committee for the three metro counties.

I was on the Washington County Coordinating committee, with one other farmer, charged with creating urban and rural reserves. We farmers represented Farm Bureau and ourselves. Unlike Multnomah and Clackamas counties, Washington county choose not to have input from Citizen Participation Organizations. Our Coordinating committee consisted of several county commissioners and all Washington County cities governed by metro. Every time we voted on most urban reserve additions, the vote was 15 urban interest votes in favor and one rural farm vote opposed. Even tho there were two farmers on the committee, we got only one vote!

This process took several years. We argued for the removal of large blocks of high value farmland north of Hillsboro (SB 186S 1800 acre site), Cornelius and Forest Grove, from urban reserves to no avail. These sites were all in the the heart of western Washington County agriculture. We and others eventually appealed this decision to the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals and won. The court remanded the " Big Look" back to metro, indicating Washington County had violated the initial rules, by using flawed criteria to bring high value agricultural

land into urban reserves.

In order to salvage the "Big Look" process, the Oregon Legislature brought all sides in the appeal together and created the "Grand Bargain". This settlement was reached by removing the urban reserves classification on the contested lands north of Hillsboro, Cornelius and Forest Grove and reclassifying them rural reserves. The " Grand Bargain" allowed counties and cities in all three counties to immediately move forward with planning and developing land inside their urban reserves and urban growth boundaries, with an adequate and reasonable 50 supply of urban and rural reserve land.

SB 186S speaks mainly to a large block of high value farmland (1800 acres), north of Hillsboro. This area is part of the heart of Washington County agriculture. There are two farmer owned commercial seed cleaning plants in this block of farmland, which are vital to the agricultural infrastructure of Washington County. Washington County agricultural infrastructure also serves Yamhill, Tillamook, Clatsop, Columbia and Multnomah counties, as well as southwest Washington. There are large blocks of grass seed and clover seed and wheat. Dry land wheat yields in this area can exceed 150 bushels per acre. There are several irrigated blueberry farms. Another farm has water rights from a farm pond.

SB 186 is about money. Farmland in the area is worth about \$10000 per acre, while developable land is \$100000- \$500000 per acre. Farming on the urban edge has it's challenges, but there will always be an urban edge no matter where the line between urban and rural is drawn.

Agriculture is the number two industry in Oregon and we have a land use system to protect it. Let the system continue to protect large blocks of high value farmland and keep our cities livable. As a farmer and a conservationist I ask you to oppose SB 186S.

Thank you

Dave Vanasche Vanasche Family Farms