

HB 2023 -4 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Agriculture and Natural Resources

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Meeting Dates: 4/18

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Restricts definition of high value farmland in Columbia Valley viticultural area to land with a valid attached water right certificate. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-4 Replaces measure. Permits siting solar power generation facility on high-value farmland located within Columbia Valley viticulture area if site is located within irrigation district and not subject to irrigation district charges, assessments and liens; or if site is located outside irrigation district and is not currently nor was it during previous 20 years, place of use of water right for purpose of irrigation.

BACKGROUND:

Under current Oregon law, high-value farmland is defined as land in an exclusive farm use zone or a mixed farm and forest zone, land west of U.S. Highway 101 that is composed predominantly of specified soils, and within specified regions.

House Bill 2023 would require the Columbia Valley region viticultural area to have a valid water right certificate to qualify as high-value farmland.