

Esteemed Committee;

I am writing to you in opposition to HB 4075. I come to you as an resident of Washington County, an organic farmer, a family physician and a community activist. I am concerned with preserving farm land and our ability to feed our growing population.

My husband and I have 18 years of experience running an organic vegetable farm in Helvetia. We run a CSA that feeds over 400 people. We have taken a small piece of land (under two acres) and have turned it into fertile ground for over 55 varieties of vegetables. The farm contributes significantly to our family income. We sit ¼ mile from the Urban Growth Boundary off of West Union between Cornelius Pass and Helvetia.

When Metro and Washington County first started the discussion of urban and rural reserves they sent a county representative to come out and talk with us. He told us how our location, sandwiched in-between industrial and residential zoning as well as exclusive farm land made us a prime target for urban reserves. He told us about the quality of our soil (or lack there of). We have worked tirelessly with our Washington County representatives and Save Helvetia to highlight the value of rural lands, local farms that grow food to feed our community. We have hosted bike tours, public forums and participated in the Cultural Festival of Helvetia. We won the fight to keep our area rural reserves.

HB 4075 must be defeated. Now we are here having to explain to you all why this bill is so dangerous.

- **This 1,700 acres is world-class farmland** and was unlikely to come into the UGB, Washington County used “pseudo factors” to present these lands as less valuable. These were the same pseudo factors they used when they came to our farm to tell us they were not valuable enough to grow crops. **Our farm brings in more money than the 70 acre piece that sits in front of us. We have shown what hard work, good business plan and creativity can do to put agricultural land to use feeding our community.**
- **If the legislature passes this bill**, it means reversing the decision they made in 2014 to correctly designate the land as rural reserve and **it means putting the farmland into urban reserve status, a designation that the Court of Appeals deemed was illegally determined by Washington County. Every other protection given by the reserves program is in jeopardy** - that means the urban reserves for UGB expansions, as well as farmland now in rural reserves, are ALL at risk.
- Passage of HB 4075 will prompt other jurisdictions to get on the bandwagon to lobby for exemption from Oregon’s land use laws, eroding laws that have protected Oregon farmland for over 40 years. **HB 4075 would set a dangerous precedent.**
- This bill is controversial and the short session is not the appropriate time to be addressing controversial issues. **There’s no emergency here** – only in the minds of stakeholders with their own financial interest.

I expect my elected officials to stand by the guidance of Metro and land use laws of Oregon. We need to protect land from special interests and

individuals who want to make money off their land by developing it instead of using it to farm or selling it to someone who will. The speculation on this land makes it too costly for young farmers to obtain.

As a family physician and an activist I know we have to be able to feed our communities. Now more than ever, with the assault on our environment and climate change marching forward at an accelerated pace. We need to save farm land. The UN report said earlier this week that small scale organic farming is the only way to Feed the World. We need to keep land for growing food for our growing population. Once it is paved over there is no going back.

I urge you to keep this bill from moving forward. This land must remain protected from development.

Sincerely;

Lyn Jacobs

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