

Cherry Amabisca
13260 NW Bishop Road
Hillsboro, OR 97124

Opposition to HB 4075

A deal is a deal is a deal - except when it's with the City of Hillsboro

February 4, 2018

Honorable Members of the House Committee on Agricultural and Natural Resources:

HB 4075 would provide windfall profits to a small group of property owners at the expense of an extended regional process that led to regional consensus. It would undermine promises made to farmers and thousands of citizens. HB 4075 would overturn a legislative settlement agreed to by all the jurisdictions in the region via HB 4078 (the “Grand Bargain”) in 2014. Now, the *City of Hillsboro seeks to renege on its agreement* and attempt to convert 1,700 acres of world-class farmland in northwest Hillsboro designated as rural reserves into urban reserves *without having to justify a need for these acres or to undertake a legal suitability analysis of the land using SB 1011 factors.*

City of Hillsboro should honor their commitment to the 2014 HB 4078

The City of Hillsboro told the legislature in 2014 that they supported HB 4078 and would abide by its terms, along with all the other jurisdictions involved in the agreement. The City of Hillsboro should honor their commitment.

Does the region need another 1,700 acres of urban reserves?

In 2015, Metro Council adopted updated regional urban growth projections in their 2014 Urban Growth Report. “... *the Metro Council finds that the existing 23,031 acres of urban reserves are intended to provide a supply of land for 50 years from the date of adoption of the 2014 UGR in 2015.*” This finding was confirmed again last year in Metro’s response to the Oregon Court of Appeals remand (Metro Ordinance No. 17-1405; June 15, 2017, page 19).

There is NO regional need for an additional 1,700 acres of urban reserves.

Urban and Rural Reserves were the result of an in-depth regional process and a regional agreement

Urban and Rural Reserves were the result of a multi-year regional process. That process included several in-depth regional research reports evaluating agricultural and forestry lands, important natural landscape features, and efficient and cost-effective urban development. The region (Metro, all three counties, and many local jurisdictions as well as many citizens) supported SB 1011. The region participated in the LCDC process to develop Administrative Rules and supported adoption of those rules. Metro and each county established advisory committees that met for over a year. Dozens of public meetings, open houses, and hearings have been held, providing many opportunities for public input. The reserves planning process was a comprehensive assessment of not only potential urban lands, but also of the highest value farm and forestry lands, and regionally significant natural landscape features across the region, recognizing the value and importance of all those resources.

Those needs were evaluated and balanced across the entire region, and decisions were agreed to by the region as a whole

From 2009 through 2012, I attended and testified at dozens of reserves meetings and hearings held by Metro, Washington County and LCDC during the four years of the reserves planning process. The four governments reached a regional consensus about urban and rural reserves designations based on several regional research reports, an extensive public outreach process across the region, and years of meetings. While some of us were not happy with some of the decisions, we appreciated the formidable effort that went into bringing four governments to a regional decision.

The region agreed on the need for reserves, the legislation (SB 1011) to authorize them, the Administrative Rules to define them, a plan for extensive public input, and a regional process to decide on reserves designations. They were later able to agree on the terms in HB 4078. They were able to agree again last year on a regional response to the remaining issues in the remand from the Oregon Court of Appeals.

The legislature needs to continue to acknowledge and recognize that this type of land use decision is best made at the local level, where our local governments can assess, evaluate, and balance regional needs for urban and rural land, infrastructure, and services in a way that is **fair to all local jurisdictions**.

The legislature should not support bills that would modify the regional urban and rural reserves unless the changes are supported by Metro and all three counties

The reserves process was designed to bring certainty to our farmers and cities. Farmers need certainty to have the ability to plan for the long-term viability of their farms. Hazelnuts, for example, are productive for well over 100 years and with the newest investments of blight-resistant varieties, they can be farmed for upwards of 150 years. The infrastructure that supports our farms need certainty as well: equipment dealerships, food processors, fabrication and repair facilities, hardware and irrigation suppliers, seed cleaners and processors, all need certainty that the farms will be there for them to service and support.

The Metro region does not need another 1,700 of urban reserves. But the region's farmers and local jurisdictions DO need the certainty that the reserves process promised, which HB 4075 would severely undermine.

The legislature should not support any legislation unless it is supported by all three counties and Metro.

PLEASE SAY "NO" TO HB 4075.

Regards,

Cherry Amabisca, MBA

Recipient, Washington County Harold Haynes Citizen Involvement Award, 2012

Member, Brookwood-Helvetia Interchange Community Advisory Planning Committee, 2012

Member, Intel Corporation Citizen Advisory Board, 2016 - present