

OSWALD FARMS

2535 Talbot Rd S, Jefferson OR 97352

I am in favor of HB 2790.

My name is Brogan Oswald. My wife and I farm 35 acres in Marion County. We are also employees of our family's farm of 2,000 acres. Two years ago, there was a proposal to bring a massive outdoor music festival to our community. This concert would bring 30,000 – 60,000 attendees each day in the middle of August, the busiest time of year for farmers.

These rural areas are not made to handle that much traffic. We have very narrow, two lane roads that may be dangerous to people who don't know the area. We need to have access to our fields at any given moment. If there are supposed to be tens of thousands of people coming into our community, there is no way to move farm equipment safely to the fields. If these events are allowed in EFU zones, then they are impeding on the farmer's right to farm. There is also an escalated fire danger that comes with that many people in the middle of summer. Many of the crops that were going to be surrounding the festival grounds were grass seed fields which are extremely dry and getting ready to be harvested.

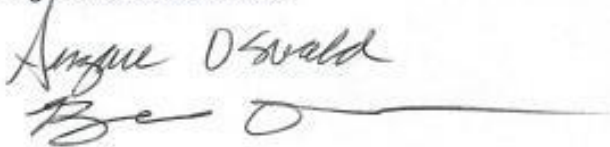
According to Farm Bureau's website, "Oregon ag & food products are the second largest export sector in terms of value, the first in terms of volume." We may be farming fewer acres, but we are still able to increase our outputs. This is due to becoming more efficient with water, chemicals, and diversified crops. This makes it even more vital to protect the remaining farmland. We can't have these types of events coming into our communities and jeopardizing all of our hard work.

We were very lucky that Marion County already has the mass gathering law that require a review for a conditional use application. The local farmers, concerned citizens, and wildlife activists were able to shut down the conditional use part of the application because this concert didn't meet the criteria. If Marion County didn't have this law, then we would have had this massive festival in our neighborhood for the next 10-12 years or until they outgrew this venue.

The main thing to remember, most of these events want to take part in EFU Zones. EFU Zones are made to protect Oregon's farmland. We are only allowed to farm in these areas, but these concerts can be held at many other venues. Moda Center and Matthew Knight Arena to name a couple have hundreds of events that take place every year. These venues are already equipped to handle thousands of visitors.

Protect the integrity of our EFU laws and support HB 2790.

Thank you,
Brogan and Suzanne Oswald

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is 'Angie Oswald' and the second is 'Brogan Oswald'. The signatures are written in a cursive, flowing style.