

Regarding HB 2645:

This bill treats dog training facilities the same as horse training facilities for purposes of the building code only – not land use law. Section 1 adds a definition of “dog training facility” to ORS 455.315.

This statute contains an exemption from the state commercial building code for buildings used as “equine training facilities.” The exemption only applies if the farm building is:

- A. Located on a farm;
- B. Occupied by 10 or fewer people at all times;
- C. Not a building regulated by the State Fire Marshal; and
- D. Not within a floodplain.

If all of these criteria are met, then a farm building used to train horses is not subject to the commercial building code. If the farm is within an incorporated city, which is unlikely, the city can disregard the statute and apply building code regulations.

Unfortunately, the statutory exemption applies specifically to “equines”, not dogs. Consequently, a farm building used by a farmer to train horses is exempt, but the same building used in the exact same manner by the exact same people at the exact same time to train dogs is not exempt. As long as all of the other sideboards remain the same for horses and dogs, so that one type of training is not favored over the other, there is no reason to hold dog trainers to a different standard than horse trainers for purposes of the commercial building code. Section 1 of this bill addresses that, so that dog training facilities are treated the same as horse training facilities for building code purposes.

In closing, I would like to note that pets are an integral part of Oregon’s population and contribute greatly to the overall financial health of the state - from veterinary care to pet dog training to sport dog training. Probably more-so than horses at this point. Allowing farm buildings to be used as dog training facilities without the added financial burdens will ensure access to many dog loving citizens and trainers while potentially creating significant revenue for the state. Additionally, a well trained dog and human are more likely to abide by other state laws pertaining to dogs and dog ownership.