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House Committee on Housing
Oregon Farm Bureau Testimony on HB 2006
February 22, 2020

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 2006. By way of background, the Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) is the state's largest agricultural trade association, representing nearly 7,000 farm and ranch families in the state.

OFB fully supports our state's efforts to address the needs of unhoused Oregonians and develop additional options for shelter for unhoused Oregonians. While OFB expressed concerns with a similar concept during the 2020 Regular Session, we want to thank the proponents of HB 2006 for listening to our concerns from last Session and narrowing the scope of HB 2006 to not include lands zoned for Exclusive Farm Use (EFU).

As we raised last session, EFU zoned lands often lack quick and easy access to healthcare, require cars for transportation, and require the development of permanent infrastructure to provide safe drinking water, access to sanitary facilities, and fire protection. Many rural areas already struggle to provide enough resources and infrastructure for current residents, especially for fire protection, reliable drinking water, and septic infrastructure. The burden an emergency shelter would have on EFU land could likely overload the system.

We believe that by focusing efforts of HB 2006 inside the UGB and in Rural Residential areas, Oregon will be able provide development opportunities for shelters in areas with adequate infrastructure and a higher chance of success for those in need, while avoiding the conflicts and resource constraints that would occur by looking to farmland.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and please do not hesitate to contact us with any further questions.

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