

SB 70 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Natural Resources

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Meeting Dates: 2/8

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Amends the statutory reference for the definition of 'high-value farmland' for residential rezoning of lands within Eastern Oregon Border Economic Development Region.

FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued

REVENUE: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

In 2017, the Legislative Assembly created the Eastern Oregon Border Economic Development Region (Border Region) and established the Eastern Oregon Border Economic Development Board (Board) through the enactment of House Bill 2012. The Border Region is defined in rule as the area within 20 miles of the Oregon border with Idaho, which includes the cities of Ontario, Vale, and Nyssa. The Board is charged with recommending policies and strategies to the Legislative Assembly for promoting workforce and economic growth in the Border Region. The Board is also tasked with identifying specific laws, rules, and regulations that place workforce or economic development efforts in the Border Region at a competitive disadvantage compared to similar efforts in the border region of Idaho.

In 2021, the Board urged the legislature to pass Senate Bill 16 as a means to increase rural residential housing options in the Border Region in response to significant residential growth in Idaho. The Legislative Assembly enacted the bill, which authorizes counties to partition and rezone up to 200 acres of lands within the Border Region from exclusive farm use to residential use, provided that the rezoned lands are not high-value farmland and other specified requirements are met.

The 2021 law defined 'high-value farmland' through a reference definition located in ORS 195.300, which are the statutes related to just compensation for land use regulation, rather than in ORS 215.710, the county planning and zoning statutes. In addition, Senate Bill 16 is being codified as part of ORS chapter 215.

Senate Bill 70 would amend the statutory reference for the definition of 'high-value farmland' for residential rezoning of lands within Eastern Oregon Border Economic Development Region.