

Committee members:

My name is Lans Stout. My wife Sue Laszlo and I operate a small hay business on our farm south of Hillsboro, where we have lived for nearly forty years. I also had a thirty-five year career in Planning, starting with the Washington County Planning Department in 1973. I appreciate the opportunity to offer the following comments as you consider opportunities for Oregon under the CHIPS Act.

Last Monday, Co-chair Sollman met via video with several of us who are on the 1000 Friends of Oregon Farm and Forest Advisory Committee. This group includes a number of young farmers who share a high level of competence and enthusiasm about the future of agriculture in Washington County. It is extremely reassuring and gratifying to see this group who loves agriculture as a business and a way of life, taking the lead in discussing issues related to the future of agriculture in Oregon. These are people committed to good stewardship of the land, as well as keeping agriculture a way of life and a significant part of Oregon's economy.

High quality farm land is a finite resource. Washington County has a significant amount of the best farm land in Oregon, and we cannot afford to waste it if we are to maintain agriculture as part of our economy, in addition to having the ability to have food production in close proximity to markets. Our land use system has done a really good job of protecting these lands for current and future farm use; this is not the time to sacrifice this good work for short term gains for a some sectors.

When one considers allocating 500 acres for a chip plant, it may not seem like a big deal. However, it is the long term consequences that have to be recognized: how much housing will this require and where will it be built? What about schools, parks, and supportive commercial space? How will the infrastructure be paid for? Will the employees in this facility be from the local population or will we just be encouraging more people to move here to fill jobs? How will this effect Washington County's position in the agricultural economy?

I remember in 1976 that having Intel build a plant in Ronler Acres seemed like a good idea... but now that we see how that step impacted our resources, I'm not so sure it was a good decision.

In my view Oregon should take the high road, and look for ways to enhance opportunities for growth in education, research and development, and in similar areas that can provide jobs while not succumbing to the call to be like other places that would sacrifice the long term quality of life for short term profits. If we take this path we can support our need for a variety of employment opportunities, as well as protecting our limited supply of agricultural land and the people in agriculture. It would be unfortunate if fifty years from now the view in hindsight was "those were the people who made Washington County into San Jose". Please do not let this happen.

Thank you.

Lans Stout  
33883 SW Firdale Road  
Cornelius OR 97113