

Writing to Oppose Sec 10 & 11 of SB 4

Co-Chairs Sollman & Bynam, Co-Vice Chairs Knopf & Wallen, and members of the Joint Committee on Semiconductors,

I am writing to express my strong concern for Senate Bill 4's approach to land use, particularly with regard to Sections 10 and 11. The problem is that these two sections unnecessarily place a target on our farms, forests, and watersheds for any type of development.

In addition, the pretense that this is not a land use action is **preposterous**. This committee's effort to circumvent Oregon's Land Use Law is so wrong – so out of sync with our Oregon way. How is it not illegal?

As proposed, SB 4 circumvents the fact that the urban growth boundary process is designed to be **local, flexible and responsive** to unanticipated growth. We do not need, nor do we want, the state to make changes or create a new process for future make-or-break acreage expansions to attract high-quality job opportunities. **We already have the workable process.** Between 2016 and 2021, 95 percent of the 37 applications to bring land into a UGB were approved – 83 percent without appeal and 80 percent within one year (that included 9 industrial lots). **We must invest in – and lock in – the zoning for the industrial land we already have** in order that it will **not be squandered for other uses.**

In addition, the proposed SB 4 overlooks the fact that **farmland surrounding Hillsboro, particularly its northwest region, is equal to the highest quality farmland in the world.**

Washington County includes most of the **Tualatin Valley which is part of Oregon's Willamette Valley and shares the same geologic history that created its unsurpassed soil quality.** For centuries the land here has been recognized as among the finest farmland in the world.

This highest quality farmland is a resource that is so valuable as to be necessary for the survival of our species. **In addition to containing Class 1 & 2 soils, it contributes to carbon sequestration and improved mental health as a peaceful relief from urban density and noise.** We have a moral and economic responsibility to protect such fine resources for ourselves and for wildlife.

In Washington County, it's easy to recognize the top quality farmland: it's flat. **In the Hillsboro region, you can also bet it's tillable, it contains no rocks, and in areas adjacent to hills the subterranean water table supports dryland farming – all among the qualities of Class 1 & 2 soils. These soils are composed by millennia of geological and biological processes, temperate climate, and coastal weather influences that together create a perfect formula for the most excellent soils in the world. These soils are resilient and adaptable to many sorts of crops.** The notion that some rich farmland is less important than other farmland that has water rights is simply incorrect. First rate farmland is irreplaceable. And it's too easily destroyed forever. Protecting farmland for our future is required by Goal 3 or our land use law.

Furthermore, the semiconductor industry in Hillsboro has been an identifiable, quiet, and seriously **threatening polluter of our AIR, WATER and SOILS**. Somehow, people think of it as a “clean” industry. In reality, **Intel Aloha has poisoned** two levels of groundwater.* And Intel at **Ronler Acres** has been caught on multiple occasions having released unpermitted **noxious pollutants** into our air, putting our region at dangerous risk.** We'll have no more, please!

Please prevent continuing efforts to ignore the Goals 1, 3, 5 and 6 of Oregon Land Use Law!

The continuing destruction of excellent farmland is a wholly unacceptable trade for jobs.

While planners chant their pleas that they just want one more thousand acres of land, sounding as though they'll never need/want more, this claim is all too familiar. It's not trustworthy. It has been heard dozens of times in Hillsboro during the 50 years of our land use process. **Each time city growth aspirations are accommodated our surrounding prime farm acreage shrinks**. Hillsboro already contains over 17,000 acres, closing in on 30 sq miles. The last two decades have seen 50% population growth! North Plains wants to DOUBLE in the next two decades! **The math is mind-boggling, frightening, and NOT SUSTAINABLE**. Most of urban Washington County was once farmland.

By removing Sections 10 and 11 of SB 4, we could have a win-win-win approach:

1. **Support economic development plans that have already been adopted by cities and towns through comprehensive planning**; improve and hold onto the urban lands reserved for industrial uses; invest in their people and places as part of a bigger vision of healthy communities, productive economies, and clean air and water;
2. **Maintain our competitive advantage in semiconductor job expansions**; bring this vision into a reality by investing in the urban industrial lands as viable sites for semiconductor expansions; and
3. **Protect our farms, forests, rangelands, airsheds, viewsheds, and watersheds.**

There's no plan B for the future of our farmland and our farm economy, nor for our air and water quality. Only YOU can protect it. Rural Reserves designation means the land is off-limits to urbanization; it's a law written by the Oregon Legislature. Please respect it.

Remove Sections 10 and 11. Please amend SB 4 to set the state up for historic success.

With Respect and Thanks for this Goal 1 opportunity,

Faun Hosey

*<https://www.deq.state.or.us/lq/ECSI/ecsidetail.asp?seqnbr=1131>

** only two examples; more are available:

<https://www.oregonlive.com/hillsboro/2013/09/intel-has-been-emitting-fluori.html>

<https://www.oregonlive.com/silicon-forest/2023/02/intel-emissions-risked-significant-environmental-harm-oregon-regulators-say-because-safety-equipment-was-turned-off-for-9-weeks.html>