

Co-chairs Sollman and Bynam, members of the committee. For the record, my name is Aaron Nichols and I co-own and manage Stoneboat Farm, a 500 member vegetable CSA farm in Helvetia Oregon, just north of Hillsboro.

Thank you for hearing from me again. Last week I spoke here to let this committee know sections 10 and 11 of this bill would irreparably harm not only my and neighbors farms but also our ability to grow food in Washington county as we pave over our best farmland and segment what remains between various metropolitan areas. I am dismayed that, as I sit here this evening, the situation has gotten, somehow, more dire.

The discussions in the committee and some of the amendments, the dash three in particular, make it clear that SB 4 could end up a land use bill in CHIPS clothing. Despite the increasing number of suitable industrial lands SB 4 seems to be on a track of taking more rural land over more of the state with less process. But, you don't need me telling you about the damage this will do to our land use system, or rural communities, and our democratic process, it's already in the overwhelmingly negative testimony sections 10 and 11 have received.

You can see on my slide the general breakdown of the nearly 400 pieces of testimony. It's about 80 percent opposed, 10 percent neutral, and 10 percent in support. Virtually all those in opposition oppose the land use provisions of the bill - the taking of farmland and the gambling with our land use protections. This opposition comes from across the state. You've heard from soil scientists who tell you what amazing land is being considered for industrial expansion.

Many farmers have written in from rural areas because we know that paving farmland is forever and that we'll need those lands before then. Many of those we feed have written in from the cities to say that they depend on and love their rural lands and don't want to see them endangered.

But I think the opposition to sections 10 and 11 are more nuanced than that. Many cities who've done the right thing, held onto large tracts of industrial land and have written in both to identify that land and point out that they've been overlooked and underfunded in bringing these lands on. Rather than boosting them up, they felt the committee ignored them. A large number of people involved in Metro's 50 year plan, from former metro councilors, to those who felt they'd made a deal and been given stability who now feel betrayed not only by breaking that deal just a decade in but by the exceptionally quick and poor review process that arrived at a predetermined outcome. Many are upset about how this committee has traded a fairly and democratic process for a capricious, pay to play system. Hillsboro's testimony in support kindly made a perfect example of how this system works: as their map shows, they talked only to the large landowners and didn't contact anyone without enough land and without enough power. My testimony last week pointed out that those of us being "traded off" and at the losing end of "hard decisions" have to drive down to Salem to even get heard. If this bill is rolled out around the state the exact same thing will happen - folks who have small amounts of land and small amounts of power can take what they're offered or not but they won't be at the table. Finally, in the petition that I wrote and began circulating on Friday and submitted as testimony today on

behalf of the more than 1500 people who signed it over the weekend and Monday, you can see a lot of the real issues Oregonians have with this bill: that it risks our lands, our laws, millions of taxpayer dollars, and even our democratic systems to make a gamble that some tech company might want to locate just outside a UGB.

But here's the good news. All this testimony isn't against the CHIPS bill, it's against sections 10 and 11 and land grabs outside the UGB. And there is plenty of industrial land for chip manufacturers in the UGB. But, if the committee truly does believe that having rural land is critical to attracting a semiconductor fab, then pass that bill separately, hold it in the rules or another committee and use it if it is needed. These companies have lobbyists and are plenty sophisticated enough to know the land is there if they need it. Then there can be no mistake - the land is available for a CHIPS funded project that has no other suitable land. We can be given a real choice between farmland and chip production and offered real guardrails that keep the land out of data centers and top golfs.

I urge the committee to listen to the testimony, listen to Oregonians, and focus on bringing jobs to Oregon not adding unnecessarily land to cities. Drop sections 10 and 11 and pass a clean CHIPS bill.

