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April 5, 2023

To: Senator Kate Lieber, Chair, and Members
Senate Committee on Rules

From: Mary Kyle McCurdy, Deputy Director

Re: SB 1087 – Restaurants on Farm Land

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on SB 1087. 1000 Friends of Oregon is a nonprofit, membership organization that works with Oregonians to support livable urban and rural communities; protect family farms, forests and natural areas; and provide transportation and housing choice.

1000 Friends opposes SB 1087. The bill would allow “farm cafes” as a use on land zoned for exclusive farm use (EFU) in Lane County, thereby bypassing existing limitations on food sales on farm land, adding to the already too-long list of many non-farm activities that are allowable on EFU land, and increasing non-farm traffic through areas of active farming.

SB 1087 would also allow seating areas up to 5,000 square feet in size and parking lots for up to 25 cars. This bill would essentially allow restaurants on farmland without the protections that the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) has already determined are necessary for food sales on farmland.

LCDC has already provided a method for food sales through farm stands, appropriately scaled to ensure that the income from food sales is subordinate to income from the sale of farm crops – a crucial distinction to ensure that farms remain the working lands they are intended to be.

The EFU zone supports Oregon’s #2 industry – agriculture. Yet every legislative session additional nonfarm uses are proposed to be added to it, threatening Oregon agriculture through “death by a thousand cuts,” something we would not tolerate in other industrial zones.

We ask you to not further this bill. Thank you for consideration of our comments.