

Submitter: Tom Bowerman
On Behalf Of: Self and Family members
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure: SB1087

Dear Senate Rules Committee Chair Kate Leiber and fellow Committee members:

I am concerned about SB 1087 for a number of reasons. Foremost, it seems inappropriate that a bill of this type is before the Senate Rules Committee; it would more appropriately go to a committee that deals with land use, natural resources, businesses, or farming. SB 1087 likely doesn't belong in the Legislature at all.

A proposed legislative law to allow non-farm type of activities on exclusive farm use lands, notwithstanding the bill's representation that it would be related to farm-stand type of activities, should be processed administratively within the Department of Land Conservation and Development.

I could elaborate at much greater length about some problems SB 1087 could create for rural farm properties, but I'll summarize a few more detailed concerns below.

The bill itself raises considerable questions and ambiguities that arise from SB 1087's generalities and deserve a deliberative process, in an appropriate forum, designed to deal with the nuances. Since the 5,000 square foot limit is considerably larger than typical small town restaurants, how would development of this size impact neighboring properties or farms? Especially at night, would noise, traffic, lighting negatively impact rural tranquility, wildlife, farm animals and rural residents? Once established, what other incremental impacts on roads and neighbors would occur? After becoming a "conforming use" under law, could it be subsequently expanded, expanded and expanded?

What would be the economic impact on existing small town cafes and pubs that often already struggle to support their rural residents, but whose taxes support and maintain water, sewer, police, fire, and traffic handling capacity in existing designated zones? Commercial nodes outside urban growth boundaries cluster commercial development to serve the local community and keep our rural lands rural.

This bill has a lot of implications and potentially regretful impacts on Oregon's rural existence as well as existing small community businesses..

I recommend you vote no on SB 1087.

Tom Bowerman, Lane Country Rural Resident

