

March 6, 2025 | Senate Committee on Natural Resources & Wildfire

Support SBs 77 and 78

Good afternoon, Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Nash, and members of the committee.

My name is Larry Duyck. I'm a 3rd generation family farmer in Western Washington County. I co-own Duyck Family Farm with my daughter Jacque, who just assumed management of our farm.

After college, I worked as an engineer for several years until I could buy my first farm. Over the years, I've been able to purchase more farm ground to make my farm a successful operation, which I'm now passing on to my daughter Jacque. She is an accomplished farmer who knows how to keep a farm operating successfully—so I don't have to worry about someone else buying the farm, failing at farming, and then asking to develop the ground because they can't make a go in agriculture. We see a lot of that.

I strongly support Senate Bills 77 and 78, which address two major weaknesses in our farmland protection policy:

- The use of home occupations to authorize luxury hotels and event venues on good ag ground; and
- The use of replacement dwellings to build expensive homes for urban workers after tearing down modest homes where farmers and farmworkers previously lived.

Allowing these and other residential, recreational and commercial nonfarm uses in our designated agricultural land preserves is harmful to farmers. It both:

Makes ag land unaffordable. Young and beginning farmers are unable to purchase or lease agricultural land because commercial, recreational and residential uses are driving up land prices beyond their reach; and

Makes ag land unavailable. In many cases, EFU-zoned land needed for agriculture is simply not available because it has been converted to a nonfarm use such as a small hotel or luxury home.

Please protect our rural communities, the ag industry and our children's future.

Vote "yes" on SBs 77 and 78. Thank you. Larry Duyck