

Submitter: Peter Kenagy
On Behalf Of: Future generations
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and
Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or
Topic: SB78

3-6-25

Testimony in support of SBs 77&78

Senate Natural Resources and Wildfire Committee

Chair Golden, Vice Chair Nash and members of the committee.

I'm Peter Kenagy, a third-generation small family farmer, who is mentoring the fourth generation to operate our farm near Albany. We grow native grass and forb seed for the restoration market, vegetable and cover crop seed, grains, and direct market asparagus and pumpkins in addition to beef and meat goats. Farming is our sole source of income.

Oregon's land use planning program is 100% responsible for protecting Oregon's world-class agricultural land and maintaining the land base necessary for us to farm successfully and contribute to the economic powerhouse that is Oregon agriculture. If our forebearers had not seen what was happening in terms of farmland loss due to both urban and low-density residential expansion in the early 1970s, our state's best agricultural land would have been lost to sprawl, as we see in our neighbors to the north and south.

Unfortunately the protections for provided by SB 100 have been continually whittled down over the year, as development interests gain ground. It is past time for us to consider course corrections that will provide real benefits seven generations out, not only for agriculture, but also for our quality of life in both rural and urban Oregon.

SB 77 & 78 are both bills that make small "course corrections" that will provide those long-term benefits. SB77 puts modest sideboards on "home occupations." Home occupations have long been a logical and sensible use allowed in EFU zones, as long as they don't negatively impact agricultural uses and don't drive up the price of farmland, making it unaffordable for beginning farmers to acquire land and get started.

Adjacent to our farm we have 3 appropriate, non-impactful home occupations. Unfortunately the home occupation "loophole" has been abused to allow large incompatible uses, such as fancy hotels and so forth, that end up having significant

negative impacts on neighboring farms, excessively contribute to traffic on farm to market roads and drive up the cost of land.

SB78 addresses the widespread abuse of the replacement dwelling provisions, by putting modest sideboards on the scale of the new houses. We have a significant problem with wealthy people buying properties with an existing home in EFU zones and replacing them with multimillion dollar homes. This puts the land perpetually out of reach of any young farmer/rancher/forester, interested in being a steward/manager of the land.

SB 77 & 78 are very modest first steps in ensuring we protect the landscape and longterm quality of life for future generations of average Oregonians, not to mention making our society more sustainable and preserving the beauty of our landscape.

Thank you for your consideration and service.