

March 22, 2025

To: House Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment

From: Jim Gilbert – Owner, Northwoods Nursery

Subject: Please support House Bill 3422

Dear Chair Lively and members of the Committee,

Thank you for scheduling a hearing on House Bill 3422. Agriculture is the second largest sector of Oregon's economy and you cannot farm without land. This very important bill will help protect our irreplaceable and productive farmland, while allowing solar energy production. While industrial scale solar facilities are important to meet current and future energy needs, they should not be sited on our prime farmland. There are many more suitable locations and HB 3422 will require consideration of appropriate alternatives.

I have made my living growing nursery stock here in south Clackamas County for over 40 years. I'm proud to be a part of Oregon's agricultural industry, which has played an important role in Oregon since the pioneers first settle here. While I am a strong supporter of solar and other alternative energy sources, they should be sited in locations where they will not take our farmland out of production. Our fertile farmland is a valuable natural resource and protecting it helps us deal with food security and climate change issues. This bill would require the siting of energy facilities to follow the same land use rules as other industries.

Thank you again for giving HB 3422 a hearing. Please honor Oregon's long legacy of farming and ranching and support passage of this important bill.

Thank you,

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PS: Please go to www.anoregonstory.com to watch a documentary film I helped make, which tells the amazing story of how Governor Tom McCall and many other farsighted and dedicated Oregonians created our unique land-use planning program.