



Co-Chair Helm, Co-Chair Owens, Vice-Chair McDonald, and Committee Members
Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire

**Re: Opposition to HB 2647-1,
Allowing a city to expand for industry**

The Oregon Association of Conservation Districts represents Oregon's 45 Soil and Water Conservation Districts, which are special districts governed by elected boards. The Districts protect and enhance soil quality, water quality and quantity, and habitat by providing technical services and supporting voluntary conservation in partnership with private landowners and managers, and with federal, state and nonprofit partners.

Protection of farm and forest land under the Department of Land Conservation and Development's longstanding Land Use Goals 3 and 4 is critical to maintaining the agriculture and forestry land base upon which our natural resource-based industries and conservation efforts rely. HB 2647-1 would significantly erode those longstanding goals established via Oregon's historic land use act of 1973.

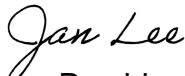
- Section 2 (4) of the bill allows urban growth boundary (UGB) expansions of cities with fewer than 55,000 people, notwithstanding any statewide land use planning goals related to agriculture, forestry, or urbanization. Currently, 407 of Oregon's 419 cities have populations under 55,000 (https://www.oregon-demographics.com/cities_by_population).
- Section 2 (5) of the bill states that LCDC review, as described in ORS 197.626, of the newly allowed UGB expansions would not apply.
- Section 2 (6) of the bill would severely restrict the ability of Oregonians to appeal the newly allowed UGB expansions.
- Section 5 of the bill would repeal multiple parts of ORS 197 that promote industrial development in brownfields, sites with superior access to transportation, and sites with close proximity to major labor markets.
- Section 8 of the -1 Amendment applies to just the City of Monmouth, creating a situation in which the legislature would usurp the planning role normally played by counties and LCDC. This would set a dangerous precedent for the piecemeal erosion of Oregon's land use planning process.

- Section 8 also specifies a minimum density of seven residential units per acre, a density that does not encourage affordable housing or developments with alternative transportation options (please see Local Government Commission and EPA (2003) *Creating great neighborhoods: density in your community*, <https://archive.epa.gov/greenbuilding/web/pdf/density.pdf>).
- Section 8 would nullify conditions set forth in Section 50, Chapter 110, Oregon Laws 2024 that require cities to demonstrate a need for expansion and to develop a conceptual plan for proposed expansion sites.

In short, HB 2647-1 would short-circuit Oregon’s historic land use planning process, result in permanent impacts to Oregon’s farmers and farmland, and set unusual and harmful precedents for the future.

We appreciate the legislature’s serious attention to Oregon’s farm, range and forestlands as the longer we ignore these challenges, the more seriously these lands are irreparably impacted. If these lands are lost they cannot be replaced. We urge you to vote “no” on HB 2647-1.

Oregon Association of Conservation Districts



Jan Lee, President