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Senate Committee on Housing and Development

Submitted via Oregon Legislative Information System (OLIS) testimony portal

Subject: Testimony in Opposition to SB 1522-1

Chair Pham and Members of the Committee:

I was a State Representative from 2003 to 2009 and then a member for eight years of the Land Conservation and Development Commission. I now live on the Linn County farm that has been in my family for over a century and where I grow hazelnuts.

When Oregon established statewide land use planning in 1973 a major goal was to protect agriculture by considering soil quality in decisions about where urban growth boundaries would be expanded. This has worked well for decades. Cities have expanded their UGBs as needed, but with attention to the productivity of the lands being taken. At the same time agriculture remains the second largest sector of the state's economy. The -1 amendments to SB 1522 would eliminate this protection by disregarding soil quality in UGB expansion decisions. If it is enacted, Oregon agriculture will suffer.

Our existing statewide planning goals provide a process for orderly expansion of UGBs where a need for more land can be demonstrated. The proposed amendments to SB 1522 are an attempt to manipulate that orderly process to get a bad outcome that will hurt agriculture.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,



Greg Macpherson