

Submitter: ZACHARY ZOUYED

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1590

To: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

SUBJECT: Opposition to SB 1590

Co-Chair Helm, Co-Chair Owens, Vice-Chair McDonald, and members of the committee,

My name is Zach Zouyed, and I live in Beaverton, Oregon. I am an accelerated nursing student at Oregon Health & Science University, a future healthcare professional, and a proud American who enjoys spending time in Oregon's outdoors with family, friends, and classmates. I am writing in opposition to SB 1590.

I value Oregon's public lands deeply. Time outdoors is restorative for me, especially during the intensity of nursing school. But my opposition to this bill goes beyond recreation or access. It reflects a broader concern about how political power is exercised, and whether it serves the long-term interests of Oregonians or the momentum of the moment.

We often hear the quote, "A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in." That idea speaks to stewardship and generational responsibility. Theodore Roosevelt embodied that principle. Between 1901 and 1909, he established 150 national forests, 51 bird reserves, four game preserves, and signed the Antiquities Act of 1906, protecting 18 national monuments. He preserved land not as a political maneuver, but as a long-term investment in the American people.

True stewardship, however, requires more than preservation. It requires sound governance. SB 1590 categorically prohibits Oregon public bodies from assisting the federal government in certain land transactions. In doing so, it hard-codes restrictions that narrow the tools available to future legislatures, agencies, and local governments. Free institutions should retain the flexibility to deliberate, collaborate, and respond to changing economic conditions, housing pressures, and community priorities. Blanket prohibitions assume today's political climate will never change. History suggests otherwise.

As someone trained in evidence-based practice, I am taught to consider the full range of stakeholders and long-term outcomes, not just the loudest voices. Bills

framed as simple protections can unintentionally strengthen organized lobbying interests by shrinking the space for transparent, accountable collaboration. When government limits its own ability to engage and negotiate, policy risks drifting further from public oversight.

As a proud American, I expect our state legislators to lead in a way that centers the people of Oregon, not political positioning or private agendas. Leadership means preserving access to public lands while safeguarding core civic freedoms: open debate, accountable institutions, and the ability of future generations to adapt and choose.

Planting trees for the next generation requires wisdom and restraint. SB 1590 constrains future democratic decision-making instead of strengthening it. For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to vote NO on SB 1590.

Sincerely,

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