

Submitter: Capers Rumph
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1586

I am writing to you today because I am very concerned about your Legislative Concept #237, the so-called "Oregon JOBS Act," which would bring 1,700 acres of excellent farmland into Hillsboro's Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) for industries including data centers. For a number of reasons, ranging from actually creating jobs in Oregon, to protecting our farmland for a fragile future, to simply protecting and following the rule of law, I ask that you drop the Legislative Concept or amend it to remove the request for land.

This land is not needed to create jobs in Oregon

As we saw in the SB 4 committee hearings, where thousands of local residents and community partners testified against it, there are many thousands of acres—and many of those in large lots—across Oregon that are as well situated and with better infrastructure for these sorts of advanced manufacturing. That includes hundreds of acres inside Hillsboro, as well as vacant Intel campuses. As we saw in the two years where SB 4 was active, no company needed or wanted land outside a UGB. What is needed is an inventory of industrial land and investments to make them shovel ready. What is needed are incentives and restrictions to stop cities from wastefully filling their industrial land with data centers and other low-job, high-square-foot usages. As happened with SB 4, asking for land creates unnecessary controversy, does not forward job creation, and distracts from the real work needed to bring industry to Oregon.

Neither Oregonians in general nor your constituents want this LC to become law

This is your fifth attempt to use the legislative process to override your constituents' strong opposition to bring in this land for a variety of reasons that have not been justified. The last attempt to bring in hundreds of acres was met with strike lines outside city hall, meetings with overflow rooms to handle the number of people opposed to the land grab. Local groups lined up to sue the state over its broken promises. This much larger and much more spurious land grab will result in a proportionally larger response.

This kind of legislative dictate sets aside 50 years of planning that has protected Oregon's working and wild lands in favor of a legislative free-for-all.

Rather than basing our economic policy on verifiable needs, the Legislative Concept sets a precedent of awarding land on a "who you know" basis. The landowners in the

area have been advocating to you for years for their land to be brought into the UGB—not because it serves the public interest, but because their land value would increase by 50 times. The flurry of bills we could see requesting land for pet projects will lead to a mishmash of laws and an unpredictable regulatory climate for businesses in and out of the UGB. It sets aside the rule of law in favor of a system that is open to corruption and mismanagement. And it sets us up for even more infrastructure costs into the future when we can't pay for what we have.

Lastly, this Legislative Concept would irrevocably destroy 1,700 acres of Oregon's best farmland at a moment when we most need it.

With a future that is uncertain in everything from imports to climate, we have to retain the ability to feed and care for our communities. This acreage and the farming systems it supports have been threatened for decades as we've replaced productive land with subdivisions and warehouses. This could be the tipping point where our county's second biggest industry, agriculture, will no longer be able to feed us or significantly contribute to the economy. As with water availability and the draw down of the Willamette River, electricity prices, and effects on other cities, the effects of this concept on the surrounding farmland have not been considered.

For all of these reasons and more, we ask that you drop the Legislative Concept or amend it to remove the request for UGB expansions outside the regular process.

Thank you for your time,
Capers Rumph