

Submitter: Travis Williams
On Behalf Of: Willamette River Preservation Trust
Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1586

Dear Committee Members -

SB 1586 is problematic and flies in the face of Oregon's land use and environmental heritage.

In the name of speculative "need" the bill seeks to provide more land for "job growth" with the likelihood being the construction of more Data Centers. As Mike Rogoway's article in the Oregonian showed clearly, Data Centers do not provide very many jobs, and this is a and verifiable fact. In turn Data Centers may receive abatements on taxes (in a State that needs Revenue for essential services), and they use tremendous amounts of water and electricity. All of this is to fuel the aspirations of those promoting AI, and the financial rewards that come with that.

The last thing Oregon needs are former farm and natural lands being occupied by Giant Boxes, humming with thousands of computer servers, sucking an endless amount of water and electricity, all so the likes of Meta, OpenAI, Google, Amazon, and the companies under contract with such entities, can make more money, or fuel their endless egos about being the "AI leader."

Unfortunately for them, investors at all levels are questioning whether AI is a good investment. Already we've seen companies like Intel (which historically received massive tax cuts), shed thousands of jobs in Washington County in the last year in the name of more AI use. For some reason though, some in Oregon's leadership have not gotten the memo. In states Red and Blue across the nation, folks are fighting the placement of Data Centers. They recognize the negative impacts, and also see that these facilities may not even be needed after they are constructed.

This issue is reminiscent of the .COM bubble, as money poured into an industry that was massively over-specified, and not actually producing much that was tangible, it finally imploded. We can honestly say that greed, and power are what is fueling the push for AI. Let's not have Oregon be a shill for this industry in the name of jobs. Yes, people need meaningful jobs, but Data Centers are not even the shadow of a long-term solution for jobs.

I urge you to NOT support SB 1586. It is ill-conceived at best.

Thanks for your consideration.

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