

To the Senate Committee on Finance & Revenue:

I live in Hillsboro about half a mile away from the open farmland discussed in SB 1586. My husband is a commercial construction electrician, and we moved to Hillsboro for the construction industry. But we are opposed to this bill because we know the effects runaway industry has on quality of life. We are originally from Utah, a state that is regularly ranked as top in the nation for economic opportunity because of its tech industry and “business friendliness.” However, it was not a pleasant place to live, and despite abundant employment opportunities, we chose to leave. Low wages, loose labor laws, irresponsible land use decisions, lack of government transparency, and rampant environmental degradation are just some of the reasons that influenced our decision to move. We came to Oregon and chose to stay because of the immediate improvement to our quality of life here. That includes Oregon's intentional preservation of farm land.

My husband helped build Mod 3, Intel's crown jewel. Last year, Intel laid off 3000 people from its Aloha and Hillsboro campuses. That's just under 2% of that area's population. Those people are unemployed not because of lack of land but because of bad business decisions. So it makes no sense to tell my farming neighbors that their livelihoods do not matter, that their businesses do not matter, in favor of race to the bottom through massive tax giveaways for corporations that will permanently pave over our resource lands and have the power to devastate working families when they decide that shareholder value and CEO bonus pay are more important than community longevity.

Everyone wants to improve Oregon's economy. But we are in an era when corporate accountability both environmentally and financially is virtually nonexistent. Our last line of defense is our local leaders, and we need leaders who think innovatively and creatively about fostering businesses that want to invest in Oregon because of our high standards and values—many of those businesses already exist in agriculture and other diverse industries. We need to incentivize the use of infrastructure-ready lands within our urban growth boundaries around the state, as well as the tens of thousands of square feet of vacant commercial properties in the Metro region.

We do not need leaders who are ready to throw the taxpayer under the bus to subsidize corporations and continually lower the bar in the name of competitiveness. The states we are “competing” with—Idaho, North Carolina, Texas, Arizona—all have abysmal environmental laws and are right-to-work states with low wages and where workers have little power. Their bar is on the floor. I have already lived like that and don't want to go back. We don't need leaders who are lulled by the siren song of tech moguls who chant that gobbling up land for advanced manufacturing is the only economy of the future, because it is not.

I oppose SB 1586 and I urge you to do the same.

Sarah Yeoman