



Testimony guide for SB 1586

Contact Cassie Wilson for questions at cassie@friends.org.

Who:

- You!
- *Note: You don't need to fill out the "on behalf of" section; it is stronger if it is your individual opinion!*

What:

- Testifying against SB 1586, a bill that would bring 1,700 acres of rural reserves into Hillsboro's urban growth boundary (UGB) for industrial use.

When:

- In-person or virtual testimony—[sign up](#) by 7:30 am Monday, February 16. The hearing starts at 8:00am.
 - *Help us pack the hearing room! If you can testify in person at the capitol, we highly encourage you to do so. Arrive early to get a seat. Look for a 1000 Friends staff member; we'd love to meet you and support you as you testify!*
- [Written testimony](#) due Wednesday, February 18 at 8:00 am.
 - *If you can submit before the public hearing, that would be preferred.*

NOTE: Sometimes OLIS (the legislature's online system) has issues loading. If you click one of these sign-up links and the page doesn't load, check back in a few minutes to see if it's working.

Where:

- Senate Finance and Revenue committee
- See [meeting page](#) for latest hearing room location information and to [sign up to testify in person or virtually](#).
- [Submit written testimony here](#).

Why: About the bill

- **This is the legislature's sixth attempt** to bring rural reserves into Hillsboro's UGB—despite rural reserves being protected from urbanization until at least 2065.
- SB 1586 would bring 1,700 acres of **some of the world's best soils** into Hillsboro's UGB for industrial use, specifically for advanced manufacturing and high technology development.
- While SB 1586 prohibits commercial recreation facilities (like Top Golf), retail warehousing (like Amazon), and “stand alone” data centers, it still allows data centers to be accessory to other uses without regulation for size or percentage of development. This means that, **if a company wanted to, they could build a data center as part of their development.**
- There are also worrying amendments that may be introduced soon.

Expected amendments:

- **Background:** SB 1586's co-sponsors were told that Senator Sollman reached a deal with the City of Hillsboro and with Metro for an amendment. This amendment was created through backroom conversations, an off-the-record vote by the Metro Council that may have violated public meetings laws, and with absolutely no community engagement.
 - **We have not seen the amendment language yet, but we're told it would:**
 - Immediately bring 373 acres into the UGB in Hillsboro.
 - Convert 1,400 acres of rural reserves into urban reserves, bringing them back into Metro's land use process and making it easier to expand the UGB in the future.
 - It is also expected that the Enterprise Zone changes will be removed from the bill.
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How to testify

General tips for preparing testimony

1. **Prepare!**
 - **Limit comments to one page.** Whether you're testifying verbally or in writing, your comments should be succinct and targeted on core reasons to oppose this bill, and how it affects you or your community specifically. Don't stray from your core points, and don't repeat yourself. Any information you submit is readily accessible to the public record, so do not share details you do not want put online.
 - **If you're testifying verbally, practice!** Rehearse what you're going to say at least a few times—and time yourself, if you can. Expect verbal comments to be limited to 2 minutes or less. We recommend timing yourself to prepare a 1-minute and 2-minute version.

2. **Why are *you* concerned about these bills? What would they mean for you and your community? (These should be your key points)**

- Raise concerns about how this will increase the cost of farmland, and reduce access to top tier soils, and impact carbon sequestration.
- Explain why it's important that these lands stay as rural reserves until at least 2065.
- Raise concerns about how this will threaten local food security.
- Share how this will hurt the surrounding agricultural economy. (Examples: harder to travel between fields in different parts of the county outside the UGB; less farming business for local small engine mechanics, seed processors, etc. so they end up shutting down).
- Explain how Hillsboro has burned through their industrial land for development that has not created good jobs and has been land intensive (mostly data centers). If they haven't brought good jobs over the last decade with the land they already have, how can we truly expect that to change with new land?
- There is a lack of accountability for cities to attract and create good jobs in their UGBs. This should not come at the cost of paving over farmland.
- If the state is breaking its promise to protect this land until at least 2065, then how can we trust that they won't break the promise that this land be for its currently proposed purpose?
- Share your concerns about the impacts on watersheds, wetland habitats, and tributaries.
- Raise concerns about this being disproportionately at the benefit of a couple property owners looking to sell their land as rezoned industrial land, rather than sell it to someone who wants to start or expand their farm operation. EFU land sells for about \$20–30k per acre, while industrial land can sell for up to over \$1 million per acre.
- Raise concerns about pitting economic sectors (tech and agriculture) against each other. Agriculture is Oregon's second biggest economic industry—the state should not undermine that.
- Offer what types of economic development policies you'd like to see instead (examples: statewide industrial lands inventory, industrial land readiness funding for inside UGBs, investments in public education and childcare, accountability for creating good climate jobs).

3. **Testimony Outline**

- **Greeting:** Good morning Chair Broadman, Vice Chair McLane, and members of the committee,
- **Intro:** My name is [YOUR NAME] and I'm... [if you're comfortable, share a few details about yourself: your job, your family role, your region in Oregon, if you help lead an organization, etc.].
- **Summary:** I'm an Oregonian who opposes SB 1586 because... [2-3 key points briefly stated].
- **Key points:** [Go into detail about your 2-3 key reasons for opposing this bill].
- **Conclusion:** [One sentence wrapping up your testimony, restating your opposition to the bill]. Example: For these reasons and more, I'm asking you to vote no on SB 1586. Thank you.

Sample testimony language—be sure to customize!

Chair Broadman, Vice Chair McLane, and members of the committee,

My name is Cassie Wilson and I'm the Legislative Manager for 1000 Friends of Oregon. I oppose SB 1586 and any amendments that would still expand the Hillsboro UGB, regardless of acreage, because it undermines the statewide land use planning program, threatens the agricultural economy in Washington County, and fails to take into account industrial land available within urban growth boundaries across the state.

These rural reserves in Washington County have a long history, but in 2014 the legislature made a commitment that these 1,700 acres would be protected until at least 2065. This 50-year promise is to provide landowners with the confidence they need to invest in their farming operation because they don't have to worry about their land being rezoned and urbanized right after investing their time and money into it. Instead, nearly every year the legislature has proposed to bring this land into Hillsboro's UGB, for one use or another. This does not provide confidence, but rather encourages speculative landholding that keeps this high-value farmland out of the hands of people who really do want to farm.

SB 1586 will fracture the agricultural economy in Washington County. It will make it harder for farmers to travel between fields that would become separated by this rezoned land. It will continue to shut down tractor stores, mechanics, and seed cleaners, further disrupting the agricultural supply chain. It will drive up farmland costs and make it harder for new farmers to access land and existing farmers to expand their operations. Agriculture is the second largest economic industry in the state, and is absolutely dependent on access to top tier soils. Industrial development does not need to be located on the world's best soil.

Lastly, SB 1586 fails to take into account geographic equity and the thousands of acres of industrial land available within UGBs across the state. Oregon needs a statewide approach to economic development, so all Oregonians can thrive. How will someone in Southern or Central Oregon benefit from the state doubling down on investments in Hillsboro? Oregon also needs a statewide industrial lands inventory, so we can all operate off the same information about where there is available land and how much there is, rather than relying on an incomplete report.

For these reasons and more, I ask that you vote no on SB 1586 and work to rebuild trust with the Hillsboro community. Thank you.

More about the bill

What it does: For the sixth time, legislators are attempting to bring 1,700 acres of prime and high-value farmland into the Hillsboro urban growth boundary outside the established urban

growth boundary expansion process and without any public involvement. The bill would also extend property tax exemptions in Enterprise Zones.

Why it matters: The targeted land comprises some of the best agricultural land in the world. Nearly 90% of the subject area involves prime farmland under normal management, the remainder being high-value farmland. Hillsboro received over 1,000 acres of industrial land in 2014, which was an ample 50-year supply. But the city has been burning through this land quickly with data center development and other commercial, recreation, and retail land uses. Data centers create few, relatively low-paying jobs. Additionally, the bill will extend tax breaks for these same corporations—companies that can easily afford to pay their fair share. The bill's focus on Hillsboro ignores the needs of other Oregon communities and lands currently available around the state.

[See info at the top of this document for expected amendments.](#)

[Submit testimony here.](#)