

Governor Tina Kotek
900 Court Street, Suite 254
Salem, OR 97301-4047

Cc'ing:

Senator Jeff Merkley
Senator Ron Wyden
Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamicci
Congressman Cliff Bentz
Congressman Earl Blumenauer
Congresswoman Val Hoyle
Congresswoman Lori Chavez-DeRemer
Congresswoman Andrea Salinas

RE: Please Only Consider Land Inside Existing Urban Growth Boundaries for Oregon's National Semiconductor Technology Center Application

Wednesday, September 4, 2024

Dear Governor Kotek:

We, the undersigned, believe that in Oregon, we can build a resilient, stable, and dynamic economy while stewarding our natural resources, engaging communities in major political decisions, and respecting our land use planning system. On these principles, we agree with the vast majority of Oregon residents and, we are sure, with you.

Right now, as provisions of 2023's Senate Bill 4 sunset, we understand that the City of Hillsboro is proposing that you use these provisions to circumvent our land use laws, bypass public process, and irrevocably remove hundreds of acres, if not over 1000 acres, of excellent farmland zoned Rural Reserve from productive use as part of the state's application for a National Semiconductor Technology Center.

While these centers are important economic engines, they are not normally land extensive. Even if they were, thanks to Goal 9 (Economic Development) of Oregon's land use program, we already have plenty of land inside current urban growth boundaries (UGBs) for this purpose. The Portland Metro region has a **surplus** of up to 7,450 acres of industrial land inside UGBs beyond our projected needs for the next 20-years; this includes large lots.

Moreover, land does not seem to be the limiting factor for semiconductor innovation in Oregon. As we have seen, none of Oregon's CHIPS Act applicants have requested the use of this provision because none of them have needed additional land in order to grow their high tech capacity.¹

¹ For example, HP in Corvallis is using its CHIPS money to grow its microfluidics technology. As the HP CEO [explained](#): "Microfluidics has the potential to drive revolutionary changes across industries,

Regarding any requests of land for a “cluster” of semiconductor-related facilities, not only do we have more than ample land for this purpose inside existing UGBs (as noted above), but the purpose of Senate Bill 4’s large acreage provision was to provide enough land for a semiconductor *factory*, not for warehouses and data centers.

At stake is some of the best farmland in the world, located in Washington County including in the Rural Reserves near Hillsboro. This land has the capacity to grow many of the 220+ crops grown in Oregon, while storing water and sequestering carbon. City expansions are almost always onto farmland, so forward-thinking decisions must conserve our non-renewable natural resources whenever possible.

Thankfully, we can protect rural industries like agriculture while supporting urban industries like technology. There is no reason to destroy farmland by expanding Hillsboro’s footprint onto this valuable and nonrenewable resource - especially at the expense of cities like Wilsonville, Corvallis, and Redmond that carefully steward their industrial land.

Senate Bill 4 gave extraordinary power to one individual, the Governor, to only be used if absolutely necessary. This power should not be used lightly, as it severely limits public engagement and informed decision making. Using Senate Bill 4’s provisions to override regular planning would mean that:

- Those who care about good governance will have no say in whether we pave hundreds of acres of farmland for the sake of companies that, despite massive revenues, receive massive subsidies and despite those subsidies are making massive layoffs.
- Taxpayers will have no say in whether infrastructure dollars will be spent on greenfields instead of undeveloped and underdeveloped lands inside UGBs.
- Farmers throughout Washington County will have no say in how to minimize threats to their industry - agriculture.
- Those who value the environment will be unable to speak for Washington County’s remaining significant natural resources.
- Those who value clean water will be unable to mitigate the increased draws of water from the Willamette River for industrial use², and the increased river temperatures due to increased impervious surfaces.

delivering speed, efficiency, and precision, to help pave the way for the next generation of innovation in life sciences and technology.”

² <https://www.semiconductor-digest.com/water-supply-challenges-for-the-semiconductor-industry/>

- And those who value clean air already saw Intel receive air pollution permits for nearly the entire airshed, right before they admitted to underreporting their previous year's emissions by 150,000 tons.

For the sake of Oregon's future, we ask you to reject requests to use Senate Bill 4's UGB busting provision; that you protect our food security, climate resilience, and democratic processes; and that you focus limited infrastructure dollars within the thousands of acres of industrial land already inside our UGBs - this includes the vacant industrial lands already inside of Hillsboro.

Oregon's livability, thanks to its land use and environmental laws and open democratic processes, has been the state's "second paycheck" (as one of the state's leading economists described it) attracting high tech industries here in the first place. If we override these for the financial gain of a few industries, we will be no different than what's happening in 49 other states: relentless urban sprawl that destroys natural resources, hollows out communities, and enriches special interests.

In Oregon, we can do better, we have done better, and we must do better.

1000 Friends of Oregon
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Center for Food Safety
Farmland First
Friends of Douglas County
Friends of Family Farmers
Friends of French Prairie
Friends of Marion County
Friends of Smart Growth
League of Women Voters of Oregon
Neighbors for Clean Air
Oregon League of Conservation Voters
Pacific Northwest Community Supported Agriculture Coalition
Save Helvetia
Thrive Hood River
Tualatin Riverkeepers
Washington County Citizen Action Network
Willamette Riverkeeper