



The League of Women Voters of Oregon, established in 1920, is a grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

March 6, 2025

To: Chair [Senator Golden](#) & Members of the [Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire](#)

Re: [SB 788](#) – Allows EFU zoned land in eastern Oregon to be used for weddings & events – **Oppose**

The League of Women Voters of Oregon, with member chapters throughout the state, has been advocating for the protection of farm and forest lands in Oregon for more than 50 years. The LWVOR opposes SB 788 and the – 3 amendment, the proposal to exempt specific counties in Eastern Oregon from existing law governing the use of high value farm and forest lands for weddings and other events. This bill is unnecessary as any county has the ability to issue temporary permits for such uses if deemed appropriate. Passage of this bill could also set a precedent for other areas of the state to request such blanket exemption from state land use planning laws. The Oregon land use law, goals and regulations have proven successful in protecting and maintaining the viability of working farm and forest lands in the state. SB 788 would serve to weaken the viability of agricultural and forest land-based enterprises in Oregon.

Wedding and entertainment venues should not be allowed as a standard use on high-value EFU zoned farmland. This land has been designated and preserved under Oregon law for working farms and commercial agriculture. It has been shown that often people attending weddings and other events in the middle of a farm zone may disrupt normal farm operations in the area. Clogged access roads, litter, noise and safety are only some of the concerns caused by such non-farm uses. Farmers in areas with event venues often spend an inordinate amount of time and effort attempting to mitigate the effect of normal agricultural functions on these adjacent non-farm venues. Farmers and ranchers are already allowed to host weddings and other events through previous legislative changes such as the agritourism statute passed in a previous session and through county-based temporary permitting. Please continue to protect the designated exclusive farm use zone and prevent the further proliferation of non-farm uses that drive up land prices and create conflicts with the intended agricultural use of EFU lands.

Thank you for opposing SB 788 and keeping in place the protections on the use of high value agricultural land for productive farming and ranching. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

We urge you to oppose SB 788 and the – 3 amendment.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Klein".

Barbara Klein
Acting President LWVOR

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peggy Lynch".

Peggy Lynch
Natural Resources Coordinator

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sandra U. Bishop".

Sandra U. Bishop
Agricultural Land Issues