

**From:** Kris Nelson  
**To:** [SENR Exhibits](#)  
**Subject:** SB 432, SB 602, SB 608, SB 612, and SB 618  
**Date:** Friday, March 31, 2017 2:10:15 PM

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Dear Chair Dembrow and Members:

Here's why these bills would not work in rural Oregon:

- There are parts of Oregon, especially rural Oregon, that have not experienced the economic recovery and growth that the Willamette Valley and cities around the state have.
- However, these bills offer a false promise that if only more raw land were available, economic development would occur. Not only is raw land very expensive to serve with infrastructure, but true economic development is more complex.
- Real solutions to spur economic development in parts of rural Oregon include state investment in transportation and transit infrastructure, value-added production, education and work force training, communications infrastructure, and research and development of new products that take advantage of rural Oregon's assets.
- Agriculture is the economic engine of much of rural Oregon. For example, Eastern Oregon's agricultural industry has seen steady growth in recent years, thanks in large part to the animal products, onions, and other diverse crops that thrive in the climate. Over half of eastern Oregon's agricultural sales are produced in Malheur County, which is #4 out of the state's 36 counties in agricultural production. It is also the state's fifth largest dairy maker, and currently leads the Pacific Northwest as the United States' seventh largest beef producer. The Port of Morrow is a growing economic powerhouse, with industries directly related to the agricultural production of the region. Economic development legislation should focus on how to continue growing Oregon's #2 industry in these areas.
- These bills disincen smart planning efforts for Eastern Oregon cities and towns. Instead of promoting smart growth, they will promote uninhibited sprawl in some of Oregon's most iconic places.

Sincerely,

Kris Nelson  
SE Portland