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May 12, 2015

Representative Brian Clem, Chair, and Members  
House Committee on Rural Communities, Land Use and Water  
State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97301

Re: SB 534

1000 Friends of Oregon is a 40-year old, non-profit, statewide organization. We advocate for livable urban and rural communities, protecting family farms and forests, and conserving natural areas, largely through the implementation and improvement of Oregon's land use planning program.

1000 Friends opposes SB 534. Senate Bill 534 authorizes a city to provide urban sewer and water services to an airport outside the city's boundaries without going through the procedures that currently exist for providing such services, if needed.

In general, Oregon's land use program directs that urban services are to be provided inside urban growth boundaries (UGBs). And this makes economic sense: Infrastructure systems, including sewer and water, are expensive, long-term investments by cities and their residents that create development-ready land. Cities plan and finance the full suite of services that are needed for uses such as industrial development – roads, sewers, water, stormwater, utilities, fire and police protection, and more. This results in the coordinated and economically efficient delivery of infrastructure and services. Does it make the land more expensive for a potential developer to buy or lease? Of course – because it has valuable infrastructure. Among other things, SB 534 goes outside existing processes to enable rural land to unnecessarily compete with the investments already made by nearby cities in development-ready land.

The land use program provides at least three ways in which a city can provide sewer and /or water services to a use outside the city, *if* there is a need: an airport requests an "exception" to have an urban service extended across rural lands; the use is added to a city's UGB and annexed; or DEQ declares a health hazard that necessitates urban sewer and/or water service. As we understand, this bill arises from the Aurora Airport. None of these existing processes has been used regarding the Aurora Airport.

In addition, urban services are not appropriate for rural areas because they conflict with farming and forestry activities by bringing pressure to develop farm and forest lands. In the case of the Aurora Airport, it sits in the midst of the most productive farm land in the state, and that land is part of the base of Oregon's #2 industry – agriculture.

We ask that you not recommend passage of SB 534.

Sincerely,

*Mary Kyle McCurdy*

Mary Kyle McCurdy  
Policy Director and Staff Attorney