

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Cherry Amabisca at 503-647-5334 AFTER 6:00 pm

Save Helvetia says listen to county citizens and protect our farmland.

Save Helvetia, a community organization formed to protect Washington County rural lands north of Highway 26, has not seen any legislative “grand bargain” affecting its appeal to the Oregon Court of Appeals nor is the organization at any legislative negotiating session.

“We are not ‘at the table’ but if the legislature is reviewing the decisions of Washington County, Metro, and LCDC concerning our lands, we call on them to respect the statewide land use goals regarding farmland protection and citizen involvement.” according to Save Helvetia chairperson, Cherry Amabisca.

Save Helvetia submitted testimony on the first version of HB 4078, a bill to validate the urban reserves decision of Washington County and Metro that included prime farmland in the Helvetia area of Washington County. The testimony opposed that legislation and stated:

“The ability of citizens to appeal government decisions that they believe are illegal is a basic right of our system of government and no less so in the area of land use laws. HB 4078 is contrary to the right of citizens to have their day in court.”

“We have not yet seen any amendments to HB 4078 but we will certainly review any legislation that may affect our appeal. We remain committed to protecting high-value farmland and citizen involvement in key land use decisions. If the county and Metro had given due regard to the citizen involvement principles addressed in statewide land use planning laws, we wouldn’t have had to utilize the court system to resolve our differences with Metro and Washington County,” said Ms. Amabisca.

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