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To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Leslie Newberry and I have owned a 1896 Farmhouse on almost 2 acres on the corner of Carpenter Lane and Cottrell Road for 30 years later this year. We bought the property not long after my husband was hired as a police officer for the City of Portland. He (and I) wanted to be away from neighborhoods, traffic and enjoy the wide rural views between us and our closest neighbors. Prior to him being hired by PPB, we lived on 23 acres in the coast mountains, so we like quiet and nature. This smaller piece of acreage, surrounded by nurseries and not densely packed neighbors, was a good fit for us if we had to live closer to the metro. I also grew up in Boring, so I have lived in a rural communities most of my life.

Over the years, we have enjoyed living in the old farmhouse, the Mt. Hood and territorial views of rolling farmland in all directions, the quiet that comes with low traffic "lane," and the dark skies (brighter stars) being away from the city and industry. During the lockdown of COVID, we enjoyed campfires in the backyard, and we witnessed the launching of a whole string of Starlink satellites as they whisked across the black sky. Watching for satellites in the night sky has always been one of our rituals when we have clear spring and summer skies. In the evening there is little traffic noise as well and we listen to coyotes howling in the draws.

About five years after we bought the property in 1993, I became a real estate broker. In my almost twenty-five-year career as a REALTOR®, I have learned a lot about property value – both city and rural property values. It would seem that the vast majority of people I know and talk to on a regular basis would love an acre or two in the country, away from the hubbub of city living. They would love to have walks down quiet country lanes, bicycle without fear of being run over by speeding cars, views of farms and rolling hills and mountains, and a little plot to garden or raise a cow and/or have chickens. Many know that lifestyle costs more – both in dollars as well as commitment to the land. So those that do manage to find rural property have usually done so with great effort and sacrifice.

In addition to being a real estate broker, I am a descendant of pioneers who came across the Oregon Trail in the 1800s. I grew up in Boring and have lived in Oregon my whole life. I remember when Governor Tom McCall, way back in the 1970s, didn't want Oregon turning into a sprawling California, so he called upon the legislature to create a system that would protect our beautiful state and pristine natural spaces. Senate Bill 100 was signed into law in 1973 and created an institutional structure for statewide planning. In 2003, ten years after we purchased our 1.67 acres on Carpenter Lane, we discovered our property had not been legally split from the original farm it was part of three owners prior to us buying it. The zoning laws changed in October 1977, and the property was divided in early 1978, after zoning went from SR-40 (suburban residential 40,000sft minimums) to MUA-20 (multiuse-agricultural 20 acre minimums). The county didn't have a proper protocol in place at the time; folks still went down to assessment and broke off tax lots. This was no issue for decades, and both the 1896 dwelling on the smaller lot (that later became ours) and the vacant 17 acres surrounding it used for nursery stock, transferred ownership three times with no issue.

We discovered this issue when we went to the county to pull permits to have the 100+ year-old dwelling lifted to install a proper foundation with footings. The county planners informed us that we did not likely have a "legal lot of record." I had been a real estate broker for nearly five years at that point and had never heard of such an issue, nor had any of my fellow brokers in my real estate office. I spent countless hours researching and looking at microfiche at the county, trying to backtrack the issue. We were told there was little the county or us could do about it, shy of reuniting our 1.67 acres with the surrounding 17.4 acres it had been separated from, which was now owned by a local nurseryman who was farming the land. We had no money to purchase the adjoining land (nor did we want to) and he had no desire to sell. So that was not a true option...financially or practically speaking.

We were stuck. We were stuck for over two years. We couldn't pull permits on the dwelling for any improvements, nor could we sell the property, as it was not a "legal lot." I spent countless hours researching this issue, talking to and e-mailing Multnomah county planners, searching online history of the county codes, exceptions, etc. I reached out to our county commissioner who didn't know what to do. I attended county planning commission meetings and spoke during the public time. The head of LCDC listened to my plight and agreed our scenario was one that "fell through the cracks." My husband and I attended a joint land use committee meeting who were taking testimony on the land use regulations and how they were working. I would talk to anyone who would listen, yet no one could provide a solution to our issue. Until I spoke to our state representative at the time, who said it sounded like we needed a law to fix our problem. The issue was finally rectified when HB 3081 was introduced in the 73rd legislative session and passed as an emergency. It was a battle, it cost us hundreds of hours and thousands of dollars. I don't know how much business I lost as a broker focusing so much of my attention on my own land use issue that otherwise would have been used to build my business.

Now the City of Portland is waltzing right in to build a huge industrial facility in the middle of this pristine farmland that is zoned for multi-use agricultural. And that is not right on any level. No one in our area contested our land use issue; most thought it was horrible that we had to jump through the hoops we did to fix it because it wasn't going to change the nature of the area.

But that isn't what is happening with the Portland Water Bureau's proposed changes. They will hands-down be spoiling the peace and quiet of this rural community – on so many levels! Not only spoiling the peace and quiet but adding multiple layers of risk and potential danger to the mix. The views of acres and acres of rolling farm and nursery land will be scarred by a sprawling industrial facility. Noise and light pollution will obviously be an issue for the surrounding communities. Dangerous chemicals will be transported to and used at the plant regularly. Traffic has already increased considerably. The City's trucks have already created potholes all along Dodge Park Boulevard.

More traffic to support a huge industrial facility (during construction as well as once it is completed) will also bring more crime to this area. As a member of a law enforcement family, there is no denying this historical truth. We have had our pole barn broken into twice in the last two years; a flatbed trailer was also stolen from our property. As a REALTOR®, I know having an industrial plant at the end of our street will also detrimentally affect property values. Just the proposal of it already has. One neighbor lost her husband recently and I had to help her with a valuation for her accountant. I spoke to other brokers who had listings in the immediate area and they all voiced their concern with marketing the properties because of the proposed plant. No one moved to this area for this and no one wants the negative fallout that will land in their laps and bank accounts.

This PWB Filtration plant isn't a cannery or a bulb farm facility that is agricultural in nature and would comply with zoning regulations. This is a large-scale complex that does not blend with the area in any way and that is unwelcome to every nearby resident I have spoken to.

It would seem to me that the City of Portland should develop this facility either at the source of the water (Bull Run Reservoir) far away from residential neighborhoods or within the City of Portland itself. They have come to our community claiming an exemption from the rules that citizens and residents of the area have to follow. We don't want them here. Their facility is a potential danger to the community in more ways than one.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leslie Newberry", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Leslie Newberry
Cell: 503.349.2727