

SB0580. Washington County Public Safety – buildings used for agritourism

Thank you for considering Senate bill 580. This bill will deregulate and boost growth in Washington County's agritourism sector, benefiting both farmers and their neighbors. By easing regulation on agritourism, this allows farmers to use their properties in new and dynamic ways. We aim to attract visitors, enhance economic development, support a vibrant local economy and promote our agricultural heritage.

Vote YES to ensure a sustainable future for our county's farming community. This will help foster partnerships between local businesses and agricultural enterprises, improve visitor experiences and create new revenue streams. It encourages educational programs, value-added agriculture and cultural events, therefore providing unique recreational opportunity for residents and tourists alike.

Deregulating existing farm outbuildings inspires farmers to adapt as agriculture evolves. From the retired commercial poultry house that can serve as a goat yoga studio, an old milk shed used as a farm store or, for me personally, my historic carriage house offering floral arrangements to my farm events and my customers... these buildings can bring life and revenue back to the farm.

The current expense of permits and commercial code requirements hinders or completely squashes these efforts.

Support bill 580 to promote growth, resilience, and community pride in Washington County.

Thank you,

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