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April 4, 2013

House Committee on Land Use  
State Capitol, 900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 2253-1 amendments (Population) - Support

Chair Clem and Committee Members:

Thank you for this opportunity to present testimony on HB 2253-1, which we support. This bill provides that the Portland State University Population Research Center will prepare, and update on a regular basis, coordinated population forecasts for cities and counties to use in land use planning. The bill includes a process by which PSU will obtain input from local governments, citizens, and others in the process of developing each forecast. Cities and counties will be required to use the PSU population forecast, and in exchange the forecast will not be an appealable land use decision.

HB 2253 was crafted by a diverse group of interests, facilitated by the Oregon Consensus Project, and staffed by the Department of Land Conservation and Development. The work group met for over a year, but the research, deliberation, and discussion was worth it because a bill emerged on which there is not only agreement on the content, but agreement that it will lead to more accurate population forecasts and will be a less expensive and contentious process.

1000 Friends of Oregon participated in the HB 2253 advisory group. We support the bill because:

- Although Oregon law has required that cities and counties have coordinated and updated population forecasts, this has not happened in many areas of the state, leading to uncoordinated planning, tensions between local governments, and expensive and time-consuming forecasting by individual local governments.
- Coordinated, accurate, and updated population forecasts are required for many critical core functions of cities and counties in addition to land use planning, including transportation and utility planning, school and emergency services planning, municipal financial planning, etc.
- The population forecast should be data and research driven and conducted using objective, scientifically sound and peer-reviewed methodology, which is how the process will be conducted by PSU. It should not be the basis for political and policy arguments, but rather should provide the technical basis on which the appropriate policy discussions can take place about where and how to accommodate people, employment, roads, infrastructure, etc...

We urge the Committee to pass HB 2253-1. Thank you for consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Kyle McCurdy".

Mary Kyle McCurdy  
Policy Director