



Feb. 12, 2015

Honorable Brian Clem, Chair
House Committee on Rural Communities, Land Use, and Water
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Or 97301

RE: House Bill 2734 authorizes city or county to organize land bank authority by act of incorporation adopted by special ordinance

Dear Chair Clem and Members of the Rural Communities, Land Use, and Water Committee:

The City of Beaverton would greatly benefit from House Bill 2734. Addressing brownfields is an important part of the future of economic development in Oregon. A land bank is designed and empowered specifically by state legislation to address the inventory of brownfields and convert these neighborhood liabilities into assets that advance community based goals. House Bill 2734 authorizes a city or county to organize land bank authority by act of incorporation adopted by special ordinance.

A wide range of studies show that vacant, abandoned, and tax delinquent properties are major nuisances which undermine the economic, social and environmental health of a community. These properties:

- Destabilize neighborhoods
- Attract crime
- Create fire and safety hazards
- Drive property values down
- Drain local tax dollars
- And, create significant human costs that raise concern about social justice and equity

The City of Beaverton has such lands and has worked hard to establish a program that could help meet the city's goals and policies to protect and enhance public and environmental health, boost economic development potential, remediate and expand existing business, attract development opportunities, and increase property values and tax revenues. Land Banking Authorities (LBAs) have been in place for more than 40 years, and could help us address these problem properties.

I urge you to support HB 2734. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alma Flores', written in a cursive style.

Alma Flores
Economic Development Manager