



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF OREGON

February 23, 2015

House Committee on Human Services and Housing
Representative Alissa Keny-Guyer, Chair
Representative Carla Piluso, Vice-Chair
Representative Duane Stark, Vice-Chair
taisheka.broom@state.or.us

Re: HB 2564 – Inclusionary Zoning - Support

The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a statewide non-partisan organization. As one of many that opposed the preemption against the use of inclusionary zoning in 1999, we are pleased to support HB 2564 that would lift the ban. Local governments should have a choice of tools available to them to implement their vision of their own future.

Throughout Oregon families are burdened by high housing costs, making it difficult for them to cover other expenses including food, transportation, and medical care. Homelessness is not just a big city problem anymore. Cities and counties throughout the state are looking for solutions. By lifting the ban on inclusionary zoning, Oregon's cities and small towns would have the ability to add this to their affordable housing toolbox. It is not the solution to our housing crisis, but just one more option available for creating healthy diverse communities.

Inclusionary zoning ensures that a set percentage of units in a development is affordable to households below a certain income level. The tool is flexible and can be tailored to meet each community's needs. Cities throughout the U.S. have used this tool for a number of years. Oregon municipalities choosing to employ inclusionary zoning will benefit from the lessons learned elsewhere.

There is increasing recognition that living in high opportunity areas close to excellent schools, transportation options, and good jobs contributes to a family's success. This planning tool increases housing options for lower income families in high opportunity areas. Successful parents and children contribute to a community's overall wellbeing, reduce the burden on social services, and increase public safety. Furthermore, when affordable housing options are available close to jobs, traffic congestion, pollution, and commute times are reduced.

Making this basic planning tool available to local jurisdictions will enable those who choose to use it the ability to ensure affordable housing in their implementation of Statewide Planning Goal 10: Housing. The League believes we can live in a state where everyone has access to opportunity and a decent, stable, affordable place to call home. By giving local communities the tools they need, including the choice to use inclusionary zoning, we can create an Oregon with a better future for all of us.

Handwritten signature of Robin Wisdom in cursive.

Robin Wisdom
President LWVOR

Handwritten signature of Debbie Aiona in cursive.

Debbie Aiona
Affordable Housing Portfolio