



**Urban League
of Portland**

May 19, 2015

Senate Committee on Human Services and Early Childhood

RE: For May 19, 2015 Hearing, House Bill 2564 - Lifting the Ban on Inclusionary Zoning

Dear Members of the Committee:

My name is Sarah El Ebiary, and I am here on behalf of the Urban League of Portland in support of House Bill 2564, which would allow the use of Inclusionary Zoning and restore local control of land use planning in Oregon.

The Urban League recently participated in several overflow meetings on housing issues in North and Northeast Portland, and the lack of affordable housing was one of the most prominent issues. We are committed to being an active supporter of House Bill 2564 which favors of lifting the ban on Inclusionary Zoning because the low income residents and communities of color affected under the current statute leaves them open to the risk of housing displacement.

Our community has been severely impacted by the adverse effects of urban renewal and gentrification. Many people and families in the African American and other communities of color are being priced out of their homes, and out of their traditional neighborhoods. Inclusionary zoning, while not the "be all end all" solution for displacement, gives cities a critical tool to combat economic and racial segregation, gentrification, and displacement. Passing House Bill 2564 will make a positive difference for healthy families and productive communities to become more successful members of the community. It enables cities to ensure low income residents and communities of color are not "locked out" of residential developments in resource-rich areas, and it promotes community health, prosperity, social equity, and increases neighborhood stability.

As more families are scrambling to find secure affordable housing, it is clear that Inclusionary Zoning could help keep low-income residents in close-in neighborhoods, reduce transportation and housing costs, and leave more money to boost the local economy with the purchase of essentials like healthy food, clothes, health care, and recreation. It could give low-income residents greater choice about living in areas with better paying jobs, good schools, and healthier environments with clean air, safe parks, and community centers.

Inclusionary Zoning is working in many communities across the country, and have shown the positive results in creating more diverse communities and generating funds for low-income housing. Only Texas and Oregon has statewide preemptions, but we can and should do better. Local jurisdictions need the freedom to choose what tools are appropriate to improve housing stability in their communities. Repealing the ban on inclusionary zoning will give them that tool and will help us achieve the goals of family stability and the attainment of self-sufficiency.

We urge your support for House Bill 2564. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sarah El Ebiary, Esq.
Legislative Assistant, Advocacy and Public Policy
Urban League of Portland