

February 8, 2016



Chair Gelser and Members of the Committee,

My name is Beverly Logan, and I am a Portland leader with MACG, Metropolitan Alliance for Common Good, a broad-based organization of faith, labor, health, and community non-profits. We are neither a housing nor an advocacy organization. We organize and develop leaders around key pressures on families in our institutions, which emerge as issues from stories heard broadly in our listening seasons. Last year, lack of affordable housing emerged as the top issue—on an unprecedented scale.

MACG is proud to have recently gotten \$67 million more to affordable housing in Portland's Urban Renewal areas. We knew, though, that it was really just a drop in the bucket of need; and that Portland's very limited tool isn't even available in other Oregon communities.

We strongly urge you to support this bill on Inclusionary Zoning; that is, please lift the statewide ban that prevents any city from requiring affordable units to be included in housing developments.

For 17 years, this basic tool, available everywhere else in the country has been denied to communities in Oregon (and Texas).

Last week on the House side, our leaders shared just a few of the countless stories we've heard, like Martha's story, submitted today. People from different age, class, and racial strata are suffering from the shortage of affordable housing. Some are forced to spend over half their incomes just to have a leaky roof over their heads, others simply can't spend more or can't find units available and are left increasingly without options for meeting this basic human need.

Lifting the Ban won't solve the crisis. It is the wisdom and good will within local communities that will innovate solutions to their respective housing crises through local policy. But the ban, to date, has preempted any broad public problem-solving at the local level.

We are years behind in Oregon—at least 17 years behind—in addressing the critical need for housing affordable to working families and people with low incomes. As city after city in Oregon is moved to urgent action on a growing housing crisis, they find their hands tied by that ban. They may find, in fact, that the crisis has emerged in large part, *NOT* because of our land use system, but precisely because of that IZ ban.

Oregon's Urban Growth Boundary is unique in the country, yet affordable housing crises are sweeping across the nation. When Washington County expanded the UGB, critical farmland was swallowed up for more McMansions. It produced no affordable housing, nor could it have for those who need it most, who need to be near jobs, transit, school, child care, community services and support networks.

Homebuyers and renters, high-end or not, are attracted to Oregon's cities not because of expensive housing developments, but because of the natural beauty and quality of life preserved by our UGB. They are attracted here because of the character, innovation, and diverse, unique culture that has been built here over generations, all through the contributions of citizens, workers, community groups, taxpayers and ethical business leaders and public officials.

As all kinds of people created or preserved the magnet (that hot market) which developers benefit from, developers should expect to contribute back to the good of the communities that made their success possible. This bill suggests instead that government must subsidize the "contributions" of developers toward remedy of the crisis they themselves helped create. And yet we ask that you help pass it, because there is no time to wait for a better bill.

All kinds of people created the communities that have become hot real estate and rental markets. All kinds of people should be able to continue living and thriving in those cities and neighborhoods, not be pushed to the geographic and economic margins.

To close, the cost of damage control if this trend is not corrected will be more than any city can bear in its social services budget, its foster care, education, healthcare, parks, transportation and prison budgets.

Our neighborhoods and cities should be growing more diverse, not less; more inclusive, not exclusive. Our people should be thriving, not despairing.

The building industry may prefer to remain comfortable, comfortably protected by this IZ ban. But massive suffering has torn across our state, devastating Oregon families, our workers, our most vulnerable citizens, and our local service providers. Your job is to serve Oregon's people, not to maintain the comfort of its powerful special interests.

Lifting the ban has been vetted and cried out for from across the state. Lifting the ban imposes no mandate on anyone. Lifting the ban creates no rushed problematic solutions; more time will be taken as local communities consider how and whether to use IZ, and how to avoid the pitfalls hindering this approach in other localities pointed to by the bill's opposition. Lifting the ban also creates no broad effective solutions. It simply allows communities to finally have a chance and a tool to do better by the people of Oregon. It can't wait. WE cannot wait.