



City of Portland, Oregon
Bureau of Development Services
Office of the Director
FROM CONCEPT TO CONSTRUCTION

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April 3, 2017

Representative Paul Holvey, Chair
House Committee on Business and Labor
900 Court Street, NE, Hearing Room E
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 2907

Dear Chair Holvey and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments in support of HB 2907, which would allow municipalities to utilize third party specialized building inspectors without having to hire them directly.

Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) 455.715 (3)(c) defines “specialized building inspector” as a “building inspector certified under ORS 455.723 who is *employed by* a municipality or by the Department of Consumer and Business Services.” [Emphasis added.] OAR 918-098-1550 contains similar language. In 2016, the Building Codes Division (BCD) of the Department of Consumer and Business Services began applying a definition of “employed” from a different section of the OARs to the specialized building inspectors that requires the inspectors to work directly for the municipality. (See OAR 918-090-0010(1).)

Consequently, the regulations prohibit a jurisdiction from contracting with a third party to provide specialized building inspection services for back-up or fill-in plumbing and electrical inspection services. The City of Portland has need of such services from time-to-time, for example, for short-term coverage on large projects or because we are temporarily short-staffed. Therefore, we support HB 2907 because it would allow the use of third party specialized inspectors to fill temporary resource gaps in bigger cities like Portland and would allow smaller jurisdictions to use specialized inspectors when their total volume of work does not justify having such inspectors on staff.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "P. Scarlett".

Paul L. Scarlett, Director
Bureau of Development Services