



Testimony by City of Wilsonville Mayor Tim Knapp Supporting HB 2907:

Proposed Legislation Facilitates Cities' Ability to Timely Conduct Building Inspections By Utilizing Certified Inspectors

Scheduled for public hearing on April 5, 2017, before the House Committee on Business and Labor

Chair Holvey, Vice-Chairs Barreto and Bynum, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the City of Wilsonville, I am testifying in support of HB 2907, which would allow cities to use certified building inspectors on a contractual basis rather than as an employee. Because building activity varies so much, hiring inspectors makes little sense.

In 2013, the Legislature amended ORS 455.715 and the definition of "Specialized Building Inspector." These changes have delayed inspections for projects and limited the availability of certified inspectors, particularly for smaller cities and counties.

Current law now limits the number of certified inspectors available to city and county building departments, resulting in a vast shortage of qualified inspectors available to provide timely service to public entities and the private construction industry in Oregon. The lack of available inspectors drives up permit costs and increases inspection wait time.

The current law arbitrarily sets a double standard for individuals employed by a jurisdiction and those providing the identical service to a local government through a contract.

Many jurisdictions cannot afford to hire full-time publicly employed inspectors. The proposed legislation allows jurisdictions to contract with certified building inspectors that saves public resources and time.

Amending the definition of "Specialized Building Inspector" in ORS 455.715 fixes this issue. The proposed language allows jurisdictions to contract with properly licensed and certified inspectors or companies to act as Specialized Building Inspectors.

Oregon benefits from this change by:

- Increasing cities' and counties' ability to efficiently respond to builders' needs.
- Increasing the availability of certified inspectors.
- Reducing inspection costs and wait times on construction projects.
- Standardizing rules for building inspectors.
- Reducing construction costs to customers.

The City of Wilsonville respectfully urges a DO PASS vote on HB 2907. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Tim Knapp, Mayor
City of Wilsonville