



American Planning Association
Oregon Chapter

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Making Great Communities Happen

April 4, 2017

Rep. Alissa Keny-Guyer, Chair
House Committee on Human Services and Housing
900 Court Street NE, Room 453
Salem, or 97301

RE: Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association testimony to the House Committee on Human Services and Housing regarding House Bill 3373.

Dear Chair Keny-Guyer and Committee Members,

The Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association (OAPA) is an independent, statewide, not-for-profit educational organization with 850 members that provides leadership in the development of vital communities by advocating excellence in community planning, promoting education and citizen empowerment, and providing the tools and support necessary to meet the challenges of growth and change.

OAPA supports House Bill 3373, which would appropriate funds to the Housing and Community Services Department and the Department of Land Conservation and Development for the purposes of employing two full-time staff members to perform functions relating to the provision of affordable housing.

It is well known that communities around the state are experiencing affordable housing shortages, and many bills have been introduced during this legislative session aimed at relieving some of this pressure. As an organization, we support many of these bills and want to help communities increase their supplies of affordable housing by adequately equipping them with the tools they need to succeed. One thing that local jurisdictions will need to achieve their goals is sufficient technical support. The creation of these full-time positions would align technical resources from the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) and the Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) to improve planning for housing, including needed zoning and code updates that would help pave the way for more affordable housing.


Given the reduction in planning assistance grants in the Governor's proposed budget, the creation of these positions is especially important and timely. Ideally, local governments would be able to access both technical *and* financial support, but grant opportunities are currently limited. This would be a way of providing additional resources to local governments in the form of vital technical support.

Additionally, it would be beneficial to have two employees working on these issues at the state level in order to maintain a broad view. The need for affordable housing is not a just local issue, but a regional one. These employees would be interacting with local jurisdictions around the state, affording them an opportunity to better understand what opportunities and constraints

exist at the local, regional, and state levels. This point of a view is an important one. As Oregon continues to grapple with housing shortages, local governments need all the help they can get, including technical assistance from state employees that specialize in affordable housing rules and regulations, funding strategies, and supporting the development of local plans that support the development of all types of needed housing.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important bill. **OAPA recommends the committee pass House Bill 3373 with a Do Pass recommendation.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jeannine Rustad', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Jeannine Rustad, JD, President
Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association