

Senate Committee On Business and Transportation

Chair Beyer and Members of the Committee,

I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB 2737A, which eliminates safety building codes to establish specified construction standards for small homes.

The demand for micro houses is driven by factors contrary to future viability, and puts owners at a higher risk, and puts Oregon at risk.

This is not a choice for cheap housing for the homeless or elderly. They must be healthy and able to climb loft stairs. Perhaps a viable option for college students, but that isn't where are housing need exists.

The primary concern is that it disregards fire safety concerns for inhabitants without thorough vetting at the State or National level. The building codes adopted in Oregon are based on national standards directed by Oregon's seven statutory boards made up of stakeholders who are in the best position to determine the effectiveness of code provisions. Oregon's unique building code system has been around since 1974, and it is one of the most successful systems in the nation. Writing codes at the legislative level undermines the system that has placed Oregon as a leader undermining the professional and technical expertise of Oregon's statutory boards and the experts who serve on those boards. Micro houses have difficulty meeting the existing residential building code developed for conventional houses for good reason.

Secondly, the Safety issue could put Oregon at Tort risk. There is no scientific evidence that it is safe to lower the standards, which may subject the state to a violation of Article 1 of the Oregon Constitution. To the contrary, evidence shows a greater risk of death from fires in loft sleeping areas.

We should not build our economy on risky standards that puts human lives at risk.

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