

From: Derek Blum
To: [JWMNR Exhibits](#)
Subject: Fwd: I Oppose HB 2007
Date: Wednesday, June 21, 2017 12:26:32 PM

Dear Representatives and Senators,

I am writing to you regarding HB 2007 and would like to register my strong objection to a number of provisions and request that you take action to amend or eliminate these provisions. Please accept this as my written testimony for the Public Hearing for HB 2007 scheduled for June 22.

As a resident of Oregon...

I am deeply concerned with the lack of public involvement in the development and review for such a sweeping bill as this. It is clear that the Oregon Home Builders Association (OHBA) and 1000 Friends of Oregon have been extensively involved in the drafting and amendments to this bill. Neither of these groups speaks for the citizens within the Urban Growth Boundaries (UGB) and it is stunning to me that public outreach and communication has been so lacking for what is deemed an "emergency bill" that has the fingerprints of lobbyists and special interests all over it. After all, Goal 1 of Oregon's statewide planning goals and guidelines is about Citizen Involvement.

As originally drafted, HB 2007 focused solely on affordable housing and measures to increase the stock of affordable housing in Oregon – a most worthy objective. But I find nothing within the bill which guarantees that affordable housing will be built. The shortening of the permitting period for affordable housing is acceptable, but is not a mandate by any stretch.

As a resident of Portland...

I am disappointed that the state has usurped control over zoning and planning from Portland and other cities and communities in Oregon. We are required by the state to have a Comprehensive Plan and all zoning must occur at the local level. In fact, Portland has already been going through a rigorous (and open!) process known as the Residential Infill Project (RIP) designed to address density and create more housing and housing options. Though I may not agree with all aspects of RIP, whose current language would permit duplexes and ADUs on almost all residential property, it is being done at the local level. I would not presume that what is right for Portland is right for other parts of the state and would leave it up to them to achieve the right balance of policies to address affordable housing in ways they see fit.

Similarly the prohibition of design review outside of Portland's central city plan zone and Gateway removes an essential tool of urban planning for livable cities and counties throughout Oregon. This is a pretty egregious giveaway to the home builders for whom barriers are lifted but are not required to create any affordable housing. At least make the one contingent on the other.

The state should not override local control and decision-making as the Bill's provisions allow.

As a resident of the Eastmoreland neighborhood in Portland...

We have been in the process of establishing a national historic district for nearly the last year to address demolitions and loss of neighborhood assets (which are the main aspects a national historic district are meant to allow) and I find it very disconcerting that the thousands of volunteer hours that have been spent by myself and others would be effectively negated by this legislation. It makes no exception for national historic district nominations that are in process -- a process which is both expensive and time-consuming. This is never how code, permitting, and zoning changes work for applications that are in already in process.

I have come to understand a great deal about historic preservation and the destructive practice of demolishing homes in Portland and elsewhere. In my neighborhood alone, the practices of developers (members of the Oregon Home Builders Association) have meant that home prices post re-development are on average 70% greater than than the homes they replace. In what manner, whatsoever, can this be construed to help affordability?

Furthermore, the bill suggests that national historic districts are being exploited as a tool to avoid addressing density and affordability. This is patently untrue and the sponsors of the bill have used this false narrative that historic preservation equates to exclusionary housing. It does not. Obtaining a national historic district designation is neither easy, fast, or inexpensive. Therefore it is not an option available to all and, in Portland, requires review by the Portland Historic Landmarks Commission and the State Historic Preservation Office. In the case of Eastmoreland, both groups have deemed Eastmoreland

as meeting the required standards. There is really no other way to view the language around historic districts as anything but a giveaway to developers who have been making millions from demolishing existing more modest homes and replacing them with very expensive ones.

Earlier this year, State Goal 5 rules were changed and these reaffirmed the demolition protection benefit of being in a national historic district, while at the same time granting Cities the ability to establish locally appropriate design and review guidelines. It also changed the rules to allow the establishment of local historic and conservation districts. That said, these options are currently unavailable in Portland and will require substantial time and budget before they will be -- a process that may take years according to the City. HB 2007 seeks to remove the national historic district option available to neighborhoods before an alternative is in place -- a situation that is surely at odds with State Goal 5 and Portland's Comprehensive Plan to support historic preservation.

And as a person...

I take great offense to Speaker Kotek (copied on this email) characterizing people who opt to live in single family neighborhoods as being the problem. In her May 25 testimony, she stated among other things that "HB 2007 would get rid of some of the loopholes that allow NIMBYism to block development when wealthy neighborhoods simply want to self-segregate, and prevent affordable housing development in their communities". How unfortunate that her testimony casts the blame on homeowners as the drivers of the affordable housing problem. And yet in her own bill she defines affordable at one point as 120% of the median family income. This was not a matter of misspeaking, as she read her prepared testimony. This was a deliberate attempt to insult and lay the blame of the affordable housing crisis at the feet of anyone who opposes this misguided bill.

In summary, I would like to see an affordable housing bill that addresses the issue of affordable housing. This bill seemed to start off with a good idea, but has been modified to the benefit of a single industry in Oregon and has no requirement they will create affordable housing anywhere in the state. Please revise the amended HB 2007 to return it to its original purpose of increasing the stock of affordable housing in Oregon.

I am a constituent of Senator Kathleen Taylor and Representative Karin Power.

Thank you for your consideration.

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