

**HB2007: SUBMITTED IN OPPOSITION**, June 21, 2017

To: Joint Ways and Means Committee, Subcommittee on Natural Resources

From:

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I am a resident of southwest Portland. I served on the City of Portland's Residential Infill Project Stakeholder Advisory Committee, representing southwest Portland neighborhoods. I also represent United Neighborhoods for Reform, a grass roots advocacy group opposing demolition of viable housing and the control of hazardous wastes from any demolition. UNR acts with the formal endorsement of 43 Portland neighborhood associations. I come with a Portland-centric perspective.

HB2007 was introduced as a housing affordability bill. It quickly morphed into a housing supply bill which will make housing affordability even farther beyond the reach of many, especially renters. This transformation was done without opportunity for public testimony and comment. Written testimony from the public was rejected at the May 24 informational hearing.

What is needed is policies which benefit those of modest and lower economic means. HB2007 does not do this.

The consequences of HB2007 will be:

- Accelerated demolition of viable, more affordable homes.
- Displacement of the most housing vulnerable families, especially renters, and their removal to the far reaches of the Portland metro region without adequate public transportation and services.
- Reduction of housing choices, both in location and housing type for the displaced.
- Increased housing costs with replacement housing costing at least 2.5 times as much as the homes demolished.
- Loss or racial, cultural and economic diversity from the inner neighborhoods of Portland.
- Potential home buyers consistently outbid by developers.
- The loss of unique neighborhood character to be replaced by monotonous McMansions.
- Loss of local control over single family zoning and very costly rewriting of Comprehensive Plans, zoning codes, and clear and objective standards.
- Loss of the urban fabric that, along with farms and forests, help makes Oregon the great state that it is.

This is a Build Baby Build bill, with the assumption that building more expensive houses will trickle down to more affordable housing. Housing does not follow a traditional supply and demand model. This is already being demonstrated in parts of Portland where luxury apartments are overbuilt and vacant, but lower end apartments are unavailable.

There is adequate buildable land in Portland's single dwelling zones, ADUs are already allowed on every lot, duplexes are allowed on every corner, and 44,000 lots are included in a rarely used density overlay.

The best outcome of this contentious situation is to let HB2007, die in committee, and then with a broad range of constituents to build a reasonable and equitable approach to housing for the next legislative session.

At second best, limit the bill to affordable housing. Limit demolitions to properties where the replacement housing will meet the HUD affordability definition. Eliminate all references to "needed" and "market rate" housing. Eliminate all references to historic districts and properties.