From: Jessica Engeman

To: Sen.LewFrederick@state.or.us; Rep.BradWitt@state.or.us; Sen.FredGirod@state.or.us; Sen Taylor; Rep.SalEsquivel@state.or.us; rep.kenhelm@state.or.us;

Rep Lewis; Rep Power; JWMNR Exhibits

Subject: HB 2007 - testimony for hearing

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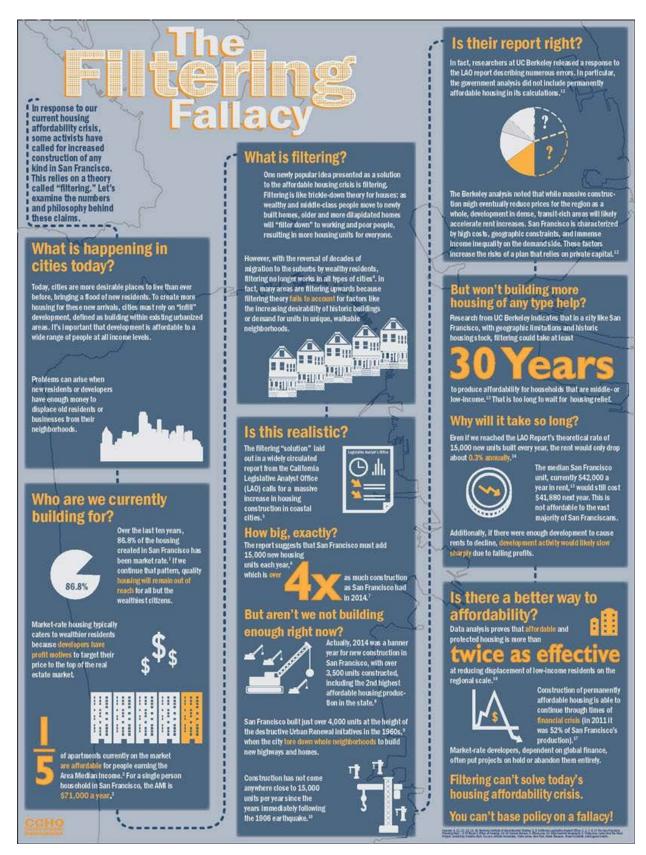
Dear Committee Members,

I am writing on behalf of my firm Venerable. We are developers who build new buildings and adaptively reuse existing/historic buildings in Portland. While we support the goal of creating more affordable housing in Oregon, we have serious concerns about HB 2007. Achieving our affordable housing objectives can and must be done in a way that increases density without demolition and sustains the historic character of our older neighborhoods.

HB 2007 should only be passed if it:

- 1. Focuses incentives on the creation of the truly affordable housing that is needed; not market-rate housing where we do not have a supply problem.
- 2. Stops tear-downs of modest-priced homes unless they're being replaced with multiple affordable units.
- 3. Enables the internal conversion of existing houses into multiple units without triggering the cost-prohibitive commercial building code. This adds density while retaining character and keeps demolition waste out of the landfill.
- 4. Leaves in place baseline protections for new historic districts, while providing incentives for ADUs, internal conversations, and compatible infill in historic districts.

While HB 2007 may have come about from good intentions, it isn't supported by facts and reality. It is a false notion that building more housing will have the trickle-down effect of creating more affordability. This is nicely explained in the info graphic below from San Francisco's Council of Community Housing Organization:



As Jane Jacobs so aptly put it, "Time makes the high building costs of one generation the bargains of the following generation." However, we can't wait 30 years for trickle-down housing to work. And, in the meantime, HB 2007 is promoting the demolition of older, smaller, modestly-priced properties that are already "the bargains of the following generation." We must stop these properties from being demolished unless they are being replaced with truly affordable housing.

and affordable housing, is just that—a big misconception. Historic designation does NOT prohibit accessory dwelling units (ADUs) or infill development. Historic districts comprise just 1% - 3% of residential zoning. Historic districts are not the problem and provide significant community benefit by protecting our built heritage that already exists.

As written, this bill makes sweeping changes across Oregon without the appropriate level of public process. Ultimately, we believe it will do more harm than good. Restore Oregon has worked hard to craft amendments that will make this a better bill. We urge you to either adopt their proposed amendments as a package, or VOTE NO.

Thank you for giving this your full consideration,

Jessica Engeman
Project Manager
Venerable Group, LLC
70 NW Couch St, Suite 207 | Portland, OR 97209
Direct: 503.943.6093 | Office: 503.224.2446
www.venerableproperties.com