



June 22, 2017

Co-Chairs Sen. Lew Frederick and Rep. Brad Witt and Committee Members
Joint Subcommittee on Natural Resources
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

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RE: Support of HB 2007 and -6 Amendments

Dear Members of the Joint Subcommittee on Natural Resources:

The Hood River Valley Residents Committee is one of Oregon's oldest local land use advocacy groups. Since 1977 our mission has been to protect farms, forests, special wild places and the livability of urban and rural communities in Hood River County.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment in support of HB 2007 and the -6 amendments. Oregon's affordable housing crisis is not limited to large metropolitan areas; Hood River County struggles mightily. In the City of Hood River home prices have increased 21.7% in the last year and the median home price is \$449,000, a price considered affordable only to those making more than \$120,000 while our area median income is \$65,800. In a city of 7,500 we currently have a deficit of nearly 700 homes that are affordable to households making less than \$100,000 a year. At the same time, our demographics are changing: nearly 1 in 3 people in Hood River live in single person households and as Baby Boomers age many are looking to downsize but stay in the neighborhoods they have made their home for years. We need a wider variety of housing types, especially smaller, more modestly priced units.

HB 2007 would help Hood River and other Oregon cities and counties by making some of the most neighborhood-compatible small footprint housing types—ADUs and duplexes—allowed by right in single-family neighborhoods. The bill would encourage the production of affordable housing by fast-tracking permitting processes. Much of our current housing crisis is simple economics: too little supply for the demand. The building industry is finally recovering from the Great Recession but our housing recovery is being delayed by long and complicated land use approval processes, especially for affordable housing projects. HB 2007 streamlines local government processes for housing, particularly affordable housing.

We encourage you to vote yes on HB 2007 and the -6 amendments.

Best regards,

Heather Staten
Executive Director