

6-22-17

Members of the Oregon Legislative Assembly  
900 Court St. NE, H-478  
Salem, Oregon 97301

### **Testimony in support of House Bill 2007A - Housing for all Oregonians**

Dear Members of the Oregon Legislative Assembly,

WE CAN, the Walkable Eugene Citizen Advisory Network, is a 100% volunteer ad hoc citizens group that promotes walkable-20 minute neighborhoods, transportation options, and housing choices for Eugene residents of all income levels. WE CAN strongly supports HB 2007 to help create options for Eugene residents and Oregonians to find and provide housing that meets a variety of needs and incomes, and continue to build strong neighborhoods and communities.

Like many locations in Oregon and around the Country, Eugene is facing a housing crisis, affecting residents at most income levels. According to a recent report, Eugene has the second most constrained housing market in the country, second only to Seattle. And our rental vacancy rate is so low that it's not even enough to allow landlords to preform needed repairs on units. According to the US Census, between July 2015 and July 2016, Eugene's population grew by over 3000 people; in that same time frame, Eugene issued building permits for just over 500 new housing units.

This lack of housing supply compared to demand has resulted in skyrocketing housing costs. WE CAN leadership team members have spoken to mental health workers worried about being able to both pay their rent and pay their student loans (required for their job.) We've heard from working single mothers who want smaller spaces so they can spend more time with their children as opposed to doing yard work. Rising rents have left residents of Eugene that we've spoken to scrambling to find housing before the price increases, in a market where finding a new rental or home may involve going door to door to see if there are any places to rent in the neighborhood. Homes are selling within days of the sign being posted out front. We've watched parents, who's adult children are sleeping on their sofas because they can't find first home they can afford, want to create a backyard dwelling to give their children some independence and a start—but be unable to navigate the rules and restrictions surrounding ADUs. The lack of housing options are hurting real people at most income levels in our community.

Demographics are changing. More and more Eugene residents, from millennials to seniors are looking for smaller homes. Accessory Dwelling Units and duplexes can be incorporated into single family neighborhoods with little impact on the look and feel or character of the neighborhood, and provide options for multi-generational families, homeowners who wish to supplement their income by providing housing to a neighbor, or someone simply looking for a home with a smaller footprint or a lower cost.

Diverse neighborhoods are stronger neighborhoods. A mix of building types, ages, sizes, and prices brings a healthy diversity of residents. Unfortunately, most communities, Eugene included, are using 1950's planning concepts that have zoned this type of diversity out of existence. WE CAN strongly supports HB 2007 as a first step to helping us create more robust neighborhoods and ensuring that we can provide all Oregonians with housing that fits their lifestyle and budget.

Thank you.

Eliza Kashinsky  
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