

HB 2165 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Business and Labor

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Meeting Dates: 2/15

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires small homes to be inspected for compliance with recreational vehicle building code if home is not permanently sited. Requires small homes that are permanently sited for use as residence to be inspected for compliance with the residential building code.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Popularity of tiny houses has risen dramatically, with television shows, magazines and blogs devoted to the benefits of down-scaled living. Some people appreciate the mobility, others the environmental footprint of living in a small dwelling, others the financial savings. Until recently, building inspectors in Oregon were inspecting tiny homes under the recreational vehicle code. However, builders of tiny homes that were marketing them as residences were told their structures would have to meet the residential code.

The Building Codes Division inspects structures for compliance based on the intended use. "Park models" trailers must comply with the recreational code when the intended use is seasonal or recreational; they are not inspected as housing. Prefabricated structures (e.g., housing, portable classrooms, construction site trailers, and espresso shacks) must comply with specific codes based on their intended use. Manufactured housing is inspected for compliance with the standards adopted by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. Single family dwellings are inspected for compliance with the low-rise residential code.

House Bill 2165 defines a small home as one with floor area not exceeding 400 square feet and it requires those that are permanently installed for use as a residence to be inspected under the low-rise residential code. The measure requires those not permanently installed to be inspected under the recreational vehicle code. Permanently installed means wheels are not attached, the structure sits on a foundation, and there is a fixed connection to utilities.