

From the desk of Janette Bynum

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Support HB 2737A: Enable the construction of very small homes

Meeting an urgent need: All Oregonians need a warm, dry, and secure home. We can increase our supply of safe, affordable housing by removing barriers in the state building code that prevent the construction of high-quality small homes.

Housing Crisis: Today, far too many Oregonians lack a safe, decent home, while stable rental housing and homeownership is increasingly out of reach. Decent, well-constructed small homes are a cost-efficient way to help meet these housing needs for both basic shelter and also for homeownership. We need to try a range of strategies to address our current crisis, and constructing small homes is one important strategy.

International Code Council: The International Code Council (ICC) writes the primary building code that Oregon follows. In their 2018 update, the ICC recognized and addressed the role that very small houses can play in addressing housing costs and homelessness. HB2737A adopts the standard that was extensively vetted and passed by the ICC for their 2018 update.

High safety standards: HB 2737A would modify clearance and access requirements for sleeping lofts in tiny houses, maintaining code conformance with all other aspects of the building code. This ensures the safety of occupants while allowing the flexibility needed to build very small homes.

Why now: HB 2737A has gone through an extensive workgroup process, with many stakeholders coming to the table to identify a path forward. The workgroup came to consensus on the amendments included in HB 2737A. Since it takes Oregon 2 to 5 years to adopt each ICC update, the passage of HB 2737A would expedite the state's adoption of the 2018 update, enabling us to respond now to Oregon's housing crisis. HB 2737A sunsets in 2024, providing ample time for the conventional building code update to occur.

We urge your support of HB 2737A.

