

House Business & Labor Committee
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

February 9, 2018

RE: House Bill 4086 Comments

Dear Chair Holvey and Members of the Committee,



Thank you for the opportunity to comment on House Bill 4086, relating to third-party building inspectors. The Oregon Building Officials Association (OBOA) represents more than 1,000 building officials and personnel throughout the state. Its members include a wide range of building officials, both in large, metropolitan cities and counties, as well as small, rural jurisdictions and includes a small number of third-party building inspectors.

As you know, Oregon has a statewide building code, adopted by the State Building Codes Division, which establishes uniform safety and energy standards for all residential and commercial buildings throughout the state. In most jurisdictions, the statewide code is administered and enforced by local city or county building departments. In jurisdictions where neither a city, nor a county assume these responsibilities, the State Building Codes Division must do so.

As written, House Bill 4086 would allow a specialized building inspector to be an employee of either a public or private entity to ensure parity in the law, which is supported by the association. Third-party building inspectors serve an important function to local building officials that have unforeseen increases in workload or unexpected staffing changes by helping maintain internal operation standards within a jurisdiction and most importantly, maintain customer service delivery needs. We believe that specific issue has been thoroughly vetted during the 2017 legislative session and the ensuing interim and is now ready to be passed this legislative session.

House Bill 4086 would also require that the building official, as defined in statute, be an employee of the municipality. We understand this new requirement would likely have an impact on both the municipalities that currently utilize a third-party building inspector company to carry out the entirety of their building program and the third-party building inspector companies themselves. As you may know, OBOA is comprised mostly of municipal members throughout the State of Oregon but does have a small number of private third-party members as well. While our association does not oppose the concept of requiring the municipal building official to be an employee of the municipality, we are cognizant of the potential negative effects on our third-party members and potential unknown impacts on some municipalities, which makes us neutral on this part of the bill. We look forward to continuing to hear from those that are directly impacted and would be happy to provide any technical expertise needed related to this section of the bill as discussions continue.

Thank you again for this opportunity to comment on House Bill 4086.

Sincerely,

Matt Rozzell
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