



February 4, 2019

Chair Fagan, Vice-Chair Girod, and Members of the Senate Committee on Housing:

The League of Oregon Cities represents all 241 incorporated cities across Oregon with the founding principle of protecting cities' home rule authority. It is this principle that allows Oregon cities to form and support the community they want, addressing their resident's needs, and developing according to the community's vision.

The LOC is deeply invested in seeing more housing develop and reach lower levels of homelessness across the state. Decisions made in these policy areas must allow for cities and the state to work as full government partners, because developing a set of tools would benefit from all levels of government sharing expertise to solve these complex issues. Cities across the state are seeking solutions to shortages in all types of housing and recognize that rental units are an important component to meeting that need.

Cities across the state are concerned that the provisions of SB 608 related to rent increases may have adverse impacts on the number of landlords willing to continue offering units in their cities. Local officials are best positioned to understand the primary issues facing their residents and can facilitate the community's response to the challenges they face. The solution to the housing shortage in Portland will look different than the solution in Pendleton which will look different than the solution in Port Orford. In the case of rent stabilization measures, cities can determine the specific impacts on the community, both for renters and for landlords. Therefore, we ask that local jurisdictions be allowed to opt-out of the state-wide rent increase caps subject to the approval of voters. However, the LOC does not have an opinion on the overall passage of SB 608.

Cities want to partner with the state to develop the best Oregon. Within that partnership, there should be a respect and understanding that local issues should be addressed by the local government. As the state continues to look at the issues of how to help Oregonians access stable housing, Oregon cities appreciate your consideration of options to let local governments evaluate impacts to their communities.

We appreciate this opportunity to express our concerns and look forward to working together with the state legislature on all facets of addressing the housing needs of all Oregonians.