

Dear Senator Dembrow and Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee members:

I strongly support SB 927 and SB 929. Together, these bills will help local communities make decisions about how to save and preserve Oregon's historic and cultural resources.

**The Public Participation in Preservation Act (SB 927)** gives local communities a voice in deciding what is of cultural or historical value. Unlike other states in the US, Oregon's current "owner consent" law makes property owners, the state and the federal government the decision-makers in determining what is important to preserve. SB 927 would change that by identifying a minimum standard of protection and local public process requirements, so that all interested parties can be heard before local requirements are imposed. It also uncouples Oregon's dependence on the National Register as the basis for protections, in line with what is standard in other states.

I also support two other elements of SB 927: designated resources must maintain their current protections (Section 4), and funding for DLCDC is essential to assist with historic inventories (Section 5). Local communities need resources to help update their current inventories, which were mostly completed in the 1980s. Funding would allow them to evaluate 40-plus years of buildings and sites for their architectural and cultural significance. This is important to community preservation statewide.

**The Preservation, Housing, and Seismic Safety Act (SB 929)** would help physically protect the historic properties by creating a tax credit for certified historic property project contributions. Again, unlike other states in the US, Oregon is one of the few states without a tax-based incentive for rehabilitation. As an added benefit, this bill would help to prioritize projects that retain or create housing.

Together, these bills offer a significant and timely opportunity to improve how Oregon's historic and cultural resources are designated, protected and rehabilitated. I urge the committee to adopt them.

Sincerely,

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