



PETER COURTNEY
President of the Senate

House Committee on Human Services and Housing

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TESTIMONY BY SENATOR PETER COURTNEY

SB 8

April 29, 2019

Chair Keny-Guyer, Vice Chairs Noble and Sanchez, members of the House Committee on Human Services and Housing, thank you for hearing my testimony today. My name is Peter Courtney. I am a State Senator. I live in NE Salem. I am here to testify in support of SB 8.

Earlier this session I came before you on SB 608. I said then that we cannot solve our housing crisis with just one bill. Today I'm here to support SB 8 to help address the supply and development of affordable housing.

SB 8 relates to affordable development. Our goal is to make affordable housing available throughout our cities, not just relegated to certain neighborhoods.

When a city approves an affordable housing project that decision can be taken to the Land Use Board of Appeals for further review. There is no real drawback to these lawsuits on the petitioner's part. Either they prevail and the housing isn't built, or they lose and the project developer has wasted time and money, if not backed out entirely.

SB 8 would require a losing petitioner to pay the applicant's costs and attorney fees. Hopefully, this will disincentivize lawsuits only intended to slow down affordable housing projects. It would also give developers some more security when taking on affordable housing projects, as legal fees wouldn't be an additional expense.

SB 8 is part of the solution to Oregon's housing crisis. It is a piece of the housing puzzle. I am glad we are having this conversation, and I thank the Committee for hearing this bill.