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Subject: Revised comments on HB 2001 and HB 2003
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Good afternoon Chairs Manning and Gomberg and committee members,

There are two atleast two bills before your consideration. HB 2003 is largely a decent bill because it calls for cities to inventory their housing stock and to determine how many households they should be planning for over the next 20 years. In migration in Portland is half of what is expected this year so the rise or lack of new neighbors is an important part of that analysis. The crisis may not be here as the proponents of the bill would suggest. But the state cannot determine that until the cities recalculate their buildable inventory and in migration work.

Section 18 should be stricken from the bill because it has a chilling effect on people raising questions about the kind of development and where it goes on any given street.

The original statutory language in Section 19 and 20 should be retained because the new language eviscerates local control over what is appropriate in the city or county. This will still be an expensive bill to implement. My comments on HB 2003 are largely my own.

The Southwest Neighborhoods, a coalition of 17 neighborhoods, in Southwest Portland took the unusual step to vote against HB 2001. A letter was sent to the Speaker. It is unnecessary because it equates volume of housing with affordability. The issue is affordability- not volume. In Portland we already have the rise of ADU's which is a form of middle housing plus hundreds of duplexes, triplexes, condos and townhouses. Mandating that every lot can or should be a multiplex is throwing the baby out with the bath water. Because there is little local planning involved about where density might be needed, it fails in many ways. New housing should be tied to 60% of MFI which will ensure that new housing of this type does not become unaffordable McMansions or multiplexes. This standard might be written into HB 2003.

The bill denies the importance of off street parking needs and fails to recognize that mass transit to accommodate density is missing, that infrastructure like schools, sewer and water development are not ready for density and that sidewalks are missing so people can walk safely to mass transit. These are local issues which need to be resolved at the local level rather than creating a sweeping mandate at the state level which has little if any local knowledge. We partner with the state sometimes to achieve these goals but the amenities necessary for density do not exist in many parts of Portland and in many cities. Those amenities are mandated by the Comprehensive plan before density is allowed.

Does the state really want to approve a bill, without the information that will come to you through HB 2003? Does the state really want a plex on every lot throughout the state? Do you, as a representative, think it is wise to allow multifamily housing to be built on every lot without off street parking? Do you as a representative, want three or four new families to move in on each side of you who have no place to park in the hopes they will use mass transit which is missing in so much of Portland and other cities? **Does the state want to be the one whose legacy will be the demise of single house neighborhoods which are cherished and recognized nationwide as special and desirable?**

The proliferation of multiplexes must replace something that already exists unless a lot is

vacant. There are facts and history to show that little houses, which are largely affordable, are being destroyed in favor of McMansions and multiplexes. Destroying the affordable housing stock drives up prices because it reduces the amount of houses available for purchase in any given city. And new construction is largely more expensive than existing housing stock. So the bill would encourage reducing housing stock, encourage new rental housing which is likely to be less affordable and eventually remove the character and livability of single dwelling neighborhoods with a mish mash of buildings, some single family and some multifamily but without adequate infrastructure surrounding the neighborhood and on neighborhood streets.

The better choices are to create more housing on corners and to open up the UGB, judiciously, to accommodate new housing on land that supports a variety of housing types. And to take the time to see if the areas designated as multi-unit or multifamily can be enlarged, especially along major transportation corridors where the infrastructure has more capacity. This would still not solve the school crowding issue, the missing sidewalks and mass transit or even frequent transit services. But those issues can be discussed along with a plan.

The Speaker has said the change will happen slowly. But it will happen more quickly. I think every citizen in Oregon would like to help with the density discussion and solutions.

But the solutions should be focused on a rationale common sense plan of adding density to traffic corridors, on corners, in judicious city areas where the schools, the streets and the people are ready to welcome new neighbors. Please vote against the bill today and give many of us and the cities more time to come up with a better solution. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Cordially,

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