

From the Desk of
Senator
Dallas Heard

Vote Yes on SB 8A: Support development of affordable housing in local communities

All Oregonians need a safe, stable, and affordable place to call home. Today, we simply don't have enough affordable and available homes for people across a range of incomes.

Across Oregon, we have skilled affordable housing developers who are experts at building safe, stable, and affordable rental housing and affordable homes for sale. Their work is complex, and begins with identifying potential locations, needs, and resources. **Affordable housing developers often engage in many months of public input and process prior to developing a building. They engage neighbors in the design process, zoning processes, and often, in processes related to local funding decisions.** Affordable housing developments that are being built today have undergone significant public input prior to beginning construction.

Even when sites are zoned appropriately, there may unfortunately be concerns expressed or challenges filed by local neighbors that have little to do with the proposals themselves. These neighbors may be motivated by concerns over living near affordable housing and misconceptions about who lives in affordable housing, and are using zoning and design arguments to increase the difficulty of siting housing. These neighbors seek to delay the development of affordable housing by filing appeals, thereby jeopardizing project funding that is often time limited, and ultimately, the homes themselves.

Senate Bill 8A provides attorney's fees in the narrow instances in which a publicly supported affordable housing development (as defined by ORS 456.250) is challenged to the Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA), and the affordable housing developer prevails.

Affordable housing is an important part of our community infrastructure, and the people who call these apartments home are vital members of our community – they work as construction workers, bank tellers, school teachers, and day care providers; they are the seniors who helped to build our community; they are the people who experience disability and deserve a place to call home integrated into our community.

We urge your support of Senate Bill 8A.



Peter Courtney

