

SB 534 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Sen. Heard, Sen. Baertschiger Jr

Senate Committee On Housing

Action Date: 04/08/19

Action: Do pass with amendments. (Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 5-0-0-0

Yeas: 5 - Fagan, Golden, Heard, Knopp, Monnes Anderson

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: C. Ross, Counsel

Meeting Dates: 3/11, 4/8

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires local governments to allow development of at least one unit on each platted lot zoned for a single-family dwelling that is within the urban growth boundary of a city of more than 25,000, unless: water, sewer, or streets are inadequate; slope is 25 percent or more; it is within 100-year floodplain; or constrained by regulations based on statewide goals related to natural disasters and hazards; or natural resources, areas, or open spaces, excluding historic resources.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Desire to maintain ability to build more affordable detached homes on historically narrow lots that predate zoning
- Currently building larger homes across multiple historically narrow lots
- Middle housing
- Local control

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Replaces the measure.

BACKGROUND:

"Skinny lots" were first platted in the Portland area more than a century ago and average about 25-by-100 feet. Skinny houses designed for such lots are typically multi-storied, and range in size from 900 to about 1,500 square feet. In-fill development on these narrow lots, within existing neighborhoods where infrastructure development already exists, can result in homes with lower market values than larger single-story homes on 5,000-square-foot or larger homes sites, but comparable or higher in market value than alternatives like condominiums. Such homes may provide additional home ownership opportunities for buyers.

So long as certain conditions are met, Senate Bill 534-A requires local governments to allow the development of at least one unit on each platted lot zoned for a single-family dwelling within the urban growth boundary of cities with populations greater than 25,000.