



Oregon House Committee on Rules

Re: Support for HB 4015 -10 amendments (affordable-ADU pilot)

Sightline Institute is an independent, nonprofit think tank for the Pacific Northwest. We work to advance sustainability in state and local policy, with a focus on building a prosperous, just and green economy.

Thanks in part to our work in British Columbia, which has made ADUs a major part of its housing production strategy, Sightline was an early advocate for legalizing backyard cottages. For the simple reason that they make use of small patches of otherwise underused land, cottages can help close shortages of housing, particularly low-cost housing, throughout Cascadia.

ADUs' fundamental cost-efficiency applies equally to market-rate and below-market housing. The obstacles to tapping this potential are mostly procedural. As ADU legalization has spread, this potential is becoming widely understood, spawning programs like the Alley Flat Initiative in Austin and those of LA-Más in Los Angeles.

The pilot program proposed in 4015-10 takes advantage of Oregon's widely recognized role as a leader in creating ADUs. It's premised on recent progress in private home financing that would have been impossible without the data and market scale created by Oregon's rapidly developing ADU industry over the last 20 years. Thanks to new practices by Oregon lenders, the state has an exciting opportunity to make precious affordable-housing dollars go further, housing more people in more ways.

However, local funders are understandably unable to fully commit to such programs without a realistic proof of concept. The pilot program proposed here could provide that proof.

On a personal note: As a resident of an ADU and the father of a child whose best friend lives 10 feet away across a deck, I can attest to the social importance of helping Oregonians of different backgrounds build lives in proximity if they so choose. This innovative proposal offers a strong chance to someday help many more Oregonians of all ages make that choice.

Sincerely,

Michael Andersen
senior researcher, housing and transportation

Sightline Institute
1001 SE Water Ave, Suite 205
Portland, OR 97213