

Yes on Senate Bill 8A: Allow more affordable homes to be built across Oregon

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. People are struggling with homelessness, housing instability, and the lack of safe and affordable homes. Affordable housing developments face barriers such as a lack of land that is available, affordable, and zoned appropriately. Local rules may artificially limit the number of homes an affordable housing provider can build, and even when sites are zoned appropriately, there may be challenges filed by local neighbors that have little to do with the proposals themselves.

Senate Bill 8A considers the important work done by the Legislature over the last five years to remove barriers to affordable housing development, considers the circumstances that continue to limit affordable housing development, and takes meaningful but measured steps forward in three areas:

- Senate Bill 8A allows affordable housing in land that is zoned for commercial, publicly owned lands, and church owned lands. A local jurisdiction would not be able to rezone the lot, but would impose requirements on design and building.
- Senate Bill 8A allows a statewide density bonus for affordable housing. In a time of crisis, affordable housing developers should be allowed to maximize their impact.
- Senate Bill 8A expands on the protections passed in 2019 (SB 8) to provide attorneys' fees when an affordable housing development is challenged to the Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) and the project prevails. The bill updates the eligibility criteria for this protection to better reflect the circumstances of affordable housing developers.

These steps all affect buildings that are completely regulated affordable housing, meaning they are built most often with public dollars and are subject to lengthy use restrictions – for a minimum of forty years.

Affordable housing is an important part of our community infrastructure, and the people who call these places home are vital members of our community. We should ease the way forward for affordable housing development for the people with the lowest incomes in our communities. **We urge your support of Senate Bill 8A.**



Deb Patterson