

Chair Fahey and Committee Members,

My name is Ellen Burns. I live in Gladstone, Clackamas County. I am a member of King of Kings Lutheran Church and the church is a participant in the Leaven Community Land and Housing Coalition, a coalition of faith communities in Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington County, leveraging our land and resources so that all Oregonians can have sustainable housing.

The people who are the church of King of Kings have a strong commitment to equity and serving the underserved. We host a food pantry. We tried unsuccessfully to use our land to allow unhoused people living in cars to park in a safe place. Many churches have land that can be used to further the mission of caring for our brothers and sisters. Using the properties of faith communities for affordable housing helps to remove one of the many barriers to affordable housing development. We see so many people existing in unsanitary, unhealthful, and unsafe conditions in our communities while land available for housing goes unused. SB8 can be a solution to the current problem of houselessness and the impending crushing number of houseless persons when the eviction moratorium expires.

Please approve the SB8 so that faith communities across the state of Oregon can build affordable housing on our land with as few barriers as possible.

Our neighbors need your help, creativity and support in leveraging every option and financing stream to begin solving the crisis of housing instability and homelessness in our midst.

Respectfully,
Ellen Burns