

Honorable Senators,

Please follow your hearts AND brains in considering how to adopt zoning legislation.

You received two recent letters that illustrate a sad situation, in which people and organizations with great hearts who are working to address housing affordability are not acting on credible evidence and analysis by such highly regarded national organizations as the National Low-Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC). Please at least read the NLIHC "2020 Gap Report" to understand that SB 458 cannot and will not produce housing ownership (or rental homes) that are anything close to "affordable" to low-income families that are truly housing cost burdened.

<https://reports.nlihc.org/gap>

"Creating a middle housing land division process will increase, entry-level homeownership opportunities." Diane Linn, Executive Director Proud Ground

"This critical change would allow developers to respond to a demand within the market for smaller sized, and potentially more affordable housing types, and be able to create homeownership opportunity." Alison McIntosh On Behalf of the Oregon Housing Alliance

Unfortunately, HB 458 will not "increase, ENTRY-LEVEL homeownership opportunities," and it will not result in "more affordable housing types."

I can speak from a direct "experiment" in Eugene. I led a project that developed the code for the Jefferson-Westside Special Area Zone, which was unanimously adopted in 2009. This zone covers a significant area of an older, (nominally) "single-family" neighborhood, adjacent to the west side of downtown Eugene.

A decade before the ill-conceived HB 2001, this zone introduced ground-breaking provisions, such as allowing creation of small lots, including lots that had access only by gravel, substandard alleys. The Zone allowed all forms of so-called "middle housing," including density bonuses for "cottage clusters" of small dwellings and duplexes. We eliminated all restrictions on ADUs – they're just treated as one of the two dwellings allowed on all standard lots. We introduced allowing on-street parking as counting towards the already low parking requirement. We were way ahead of, and much smarter than. the HB 2001 zealots.

What we've seen in the past decade is lot divisions to produce small lots, and small, detached homes a number of which were sold, while others are rented. Critically, we've had no demolitions as part of a redevelopment "gentrification."

Despite being having small lots and floor areas, none of the new homes that were sold were affordable for low-income households. They do, however, provide a second stage of an "on ramp" for new, often younger households of modest means, to live in our neighborhood after renting one of many small, older and relatively affordable houses, ADUs or apartments.

HB 2001 BROKE OUR EFFORTS!

As the "middle housing" OAR has implemented HB 2001, we're forced to eliminate creation of small lots and alley lots because the infrastructure cannot support duplexes on all of these lots interspersed without any planning for infrastructure, emergency services, sidewalk safety and impacts throughout the neighborhood.

SB 458 is frankly all about a toxic mix of "religion" and "greed," with neither sound hearts nor sharp brains behind its deregulation. I can tell you from experiences in adjacent zones in Eugene that every measure of deregulation you force on jurisdictions, while leaving it wholly up to the Blackstone Real Estate Investment's and other major investment funds as to what to build, where and how much, will just fuel high-margin redevelopment and displacement through demolitions and rising rental rates.

Small lots with single dwellings are a GREAT idea! We've done it right, and it helps.

If YOU want to help, reject SB 458, and amend HB 2001 to allow small lots with one dwelling (instead of forcing a duplex on every lot). That would empower the kind of real-world "affordability" solutions we've already implemented successfully.

Thank you,

Paul Conte