



February 1, 2021
House Committee on Housing
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Further Amendments Needed for HB 2283-1

Dear Chair Fahey and Members of the Committee:

The League of Oregon Cities (LOC) represents all 241 cities across Oregon, which continue to face escalating rates of homelessness and a shortage of affordable and available housing. In the 2021 Legislative Session, the LOC is advocating to increase critical state investments in housing and services programs across the housing spectrum, from preventing and ending homelessness, to developing and maintaining affordable homes, to increasing access to and maintenance of affordable homeownership. The League is also engaged this session as your committed partner in both crafting and implementing sound policies to reduce barriers to affordable housing development and help increase our state's supply of needed housing.

The LOC supports the underlying intent of the bill – to increase affordable homeownership options by providing a uniform, streamlined process for the review and approval of land divisions for middle housing types – but cannot support the bill in its current form. As introduced, the bill prohibited cities from requiring critical approval criteria including building code, public and private utility access, and access for emergency services. We appreciate that Habitat for Humanity and the Homebuilders were willing to seek amendments to address our concerns. However, while the -1 amendments made improvements, they still include many technical barriers to implementation.

The LOC hopes to continue working with Habitat for Humanity and the Homebuilders on additional, needed improvements. More work is needed to ensure the bill can align with existing processes and timelines for building permit approvals, public works requirements, land use approvals, and land divisions. The current language would force applications for middle housing land division ahead of all other land use decisions, including affordable housing or wildfire rebuilding, which we understand is not the intent. The -1 also currently prohibits cities from requiring shared services agreements to ensure properties are appropriately maintained. We have shared detailed feedback and suggested edits with Habitat for Humanity and Homebuilders and ask that the Committee give us time to work through these important technical details in further amendments to ensure the bill can be implemented as intended.

Thank you for your consideration,
Ariel Nelson, League of Oregon Cities