

Submitter: Pat DeLaquil

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB1537

TO: SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

Subject: SB 1537 – Housing Cost Impact Statement Changes

Chair Jama, Vice Chair Anderson, and Members of the Committee

SB 1537 is another example in a long line of anti-regulation legislation that is intended to constrain state agencies and make it harder to enact new regulations or rules. The bill is presented as an attempt to protect low-income Oregonians from displacement; but it was not crafted in collaboration with low-income advocates; it was crafted by the Oregon Homebuilders and their allies to benefit their bottom line.

SB 1537 expands what must be included in a housing cost impact statement, which is required for proposed rules, to include the actions of many additional state agencies. The bill would make a significant change to existing law, but there has no collaboration or discussion of the proposed legislation with impacted stakeholders, and it is not appropriate to move such a bill in the short session.

If enacted, SB 1537 would require complex and nebulous assessments that could become a prohibitively expensive burden on agency rulemaking and compliance, and would have very real impacts on the ability of agencies, lawmakers and local communities to advance critical regulations that improve lives and livelihoods, including regulations related to climate action, public health, energy efficiency, wildfire prevention, reduction of energy burdens, and safety.

In fact, SB 1537 is overkill. There already are cost assessments built into agency rulemaking. For example, the Building Codes Division regularly assesses the cost impact of any new code advancements; this bill simply puts a new and burdensome layer onto that work.

While I support the purported goal of preventing the displacement of low income Oregonians, the anti-regulation consequence of this bill would set a near-impossible bar for any new regulation by any of the named agencies to ever be adopted.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the Committee to oppose SB 1537.

Sincerely,
Dr. Pat DeLaquil

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