

Submitter: Angie Mombert
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: HB3414

Chairman, Committee Members,

It's clear to see that Oregon's existing urban growth boundaries (UGBs) are insufficient to meet the state's growing housing demands. With only 395,320 acres out of 63 million zoned for residential use within these boundaries, we are attempting to house the population of Oregon on less than half of one percent of available land. This imbalance between supply and demand is the root cause of the escalating housing costs we're currently facing. By limiting the amount of land that's available for residential development, we're artificially inflating its cost. This, in turn, makes it increasingly difficult for developers to build affordable housing and for families to afford a decent place to live.

The Governor's goal of constructing 36,000 units per year is admirable but unachievable under current regulations. We need a paradigm shift if we are to meet this target and provide affordable housing options for all Oregonians.

Bill HB3414-17 presents a viable, forward-thinking solution to this problem. This bill proposes a voluntary process enabling cities to expand their UGBs provided that urban reserve land meets certain conditions, and a significant proportion is dedicated to the construction of middle-income, workforce, and rental units.

By adopting this bill, we're not only addressing the pressing need for affordable housing, but we're also fueling economic development, particularly in rural communities. Construction will provide jobs, and the influx of new residents will stimulate local economies, leading to a ripple effect of benefits for these areas. Passing this bill won't immediately solve all of Oregon's housing issues, but it's an important step in the right direction. We must act now to avoid further exacerbation of the housing crisis.

I strongly urge the committee to consider the long-term impacts of their decision today. We have an opportunity to make a significant, positive change for the people of Oregon, to pave the way for increased housing affordability, and to stimulate growth in rural areas. Please, let us make the most of it by supporting Bill HB3414-17.

Thank you.