

To: House Committee on Housing and Homelessness

Submitter: Anders Hart

Date: February 5, 2023

Measure: HB 2889

Oregon's housing crisis threatens the state's economic prospects and disproportionately affects low-income and historically marginalized groups. If housing affordability continues to worsen, the state risks losing workers and families who are vital to our state's future prosperity. Urgent action is needed to increase housing production, especially in high-opportunity areas near jobs and transit.

I urge you to recommend HB 2889 for approval. This bill establishes an Oregon Housing Needs Analysis (OHNA) framework that will increase analytical rigor and accountability for housing production throughout the state. It balances the need to apply pressure on local governments to increase housing production while allowing them flexibility to experiment with strategies that suit their circumstances.

I also encourage you to prioritize climate-smart development as part of this legislative effort. Housing production should not come in form of car-dependent sprawl that increases pollution. Sprawl burdens households high transportation costs and local governments with excessive infrastructure liabilities. Urban growth boundary (UGB) expansions should only be approved when housing needs cannot be met with higher density within UGBs. It is crucial that OHNA works in concert with the recently approved Climate-Friendly and Equitable Communities rules to reduce vehicle-miles driven and promote walkable communities.

State-level action encapsulated in this bill is necessary to overcome local opposition that prevents sufficient and equitable housing production. This bill is a major step in the right direction, and I encourage you to favorably recommend it.