

FROM – Lynnea Miller  
TO – Senate Committee On Housing and Development  
SUBJECT – SB 1051-2 Deserves Your Support

I am writing to urge you to support SB 1051 with the -2 amendments. Oregon is the fourth most underproduced state in the nation as a share of our existing housing stock, and as a result, our housing costs are among the highest in the country. Some experts have found that Oregon is the fourth least affordable place to live in the US.

Limited buildable lands drive up costs in the same way that limited housing inventory does. The beauty of SB 1051-2 is that it brings lands into development today that are already planned for development tomorrow. In the long run, this means that we don't actually lose more of the lands that make Oregon beautiful, while in the short run, we gain lands that make Oregon more livable.

While there are many reasons to live in Bend, one of the most enticing reasons is the natural beauty of Central Oregon. However, Bend is also one of the most expensive housing markets in the state, making it unaffordable for many lower- and middle-income households. SB 1051-2 would provide my city with an inventive and thoughtfully developed tool to help improve the affordability of Bend while still protecting the natural beauty of our surroundings.

This is because SB 1051-2 is a modest, reasonable solution. It provides a voluntary tool for cities that utilizes the power of partnerships to achieve results. SB 1051-2 will help us produce needed housing for some of our most important workers, such as firefighters, nurses, teachers, small business owners, and public employees. These workers are essential to our community, but low housing inventory and high prices, both of which are impacted by a limited land supply, make Bend a more financially challenging place for them to live. The least we can do is give them the opportunity to find housing that they can afford.

We desperately need more housing to bring down the cost of living for Oregon families. Many are struggling to find affordable and attainable housing, and as a result, a substantial portion of Oregonians are cost burdened by their housing payments. SB 1051-2 provides small and large cities alike with a carefully crafted, impactful tool to ramp up housing production and ultimately lower the cost of living in Oregon.

The Governor, the Legislature, and our state agencies have all agreed that addressing our housing crisis is a top priority, but without creative solutions like SB 1051-2, our state will be unable to address the crisis at the scale and speed that is needed to protect Oregon families and their budgets.

Please support SB 1051 with the -2 amendment.