



March 23, 2023

**Clackamas County Board of Commissioners
Policy Position
Relating to Housing Development Variances**

Clackamas County opposes HB 3414, and we wish to highlight the following concerns:

Prevents public involvement: Top-down approaches can produce conflicts between state goals. Notably, HB 3414 is counter to the very pillar of Oregon’s unique land use system: Goal 1, Citizen Involvement. The provisions of HB 3414 supersede local development standards that were developed by gathering input from community members and implemented by volunteer Planning Commissioners and elected officials. The proposal will render all but a narrow list of development criteria effectively irrelevant.

Does not address the housing problem: Jurisdictions are obligated to provide clear and objective criteria for housing so that developers can have certainty as they move forward. We see this working well in Clackamas County, which has several of the state’s fastest growing cities, including Wilsonville, Happy Valley, and Estacada. The proposed variance criteria are not clear and objective and will introduce uncertainty and new avenues of legal challenge. This is counterproductive to the goal of efficient approval of additional housing units.

Adds unnecessary bureaucracy: The addition of a new entity to effectively manage work that already happens at the local level is redundant. Not only does the work at the local level not go away, the additional oversight effectively means there are more opportunities for conflict and poor use of public funds for a state and agency where public funding is already stretched thin.

We implore a more thoughtful solution to local land use hurdles than the prevailing efforts by the state legislature to override the intent of Oregon’s local land use system and the will of the people.

We urge a “no” vote on HB 3414.

Please contact Chris Lyons at clyons@clackamas.us for more information.