

Submitter: Roberta Jortner
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: HB3414

Thank you for considering my testimony opposing HB 3414. This bill is a shortsighted approach to facilitate the construction of housing that will have serious unintended consequences. These include impacts on air and water quality, increased urban heat island impacts, and negative impacts on human health and overall climate resilience. Increasingly, we are learning that areas with sparse tree canopy are hotter and less healthy than areas with abundant tree canopy nationwide, with specific examples in Oregon making national news. It is also clear that the health impacts of tree canopy deficiency are disproportionately experienced by residents who are lower income and/or communities of color. Allowing variances to local environmental/tree protections and stormwater management requirements runs counter to decades of local efforts and investments to meet all of Oregon's land use goals, not just the Housing Goal. This bill would perpetuate existing environmental injustices by creating housing that will be unhealthy for those it was intended to help and exacerbating the impacts of climate change including heat and flooding. I urge you not to approve this bill, but rather to seek and demand policies and legislation that is designed to meet multiple goals for housing, environmental quality, public health, and climate resilience.

Sincerely,
Roberta Jortner