
February 5, 2024

House Interim Committee on Housing and Homelessness

RE: HB 4134, Housing Oregon's Workforce (HOW) Bill

Dear Chair Representative Dexter, Vice Chairs Representative Breese-Iverson and Representative Gamba, and Members of the Committee,

The City of McMinnville's Affordable Housing Task Force voted unanimously at their meeting on January 24, 2024 to authorize me to send this letter of support for HB 4134.

HB 4134 is critical for smaller communities like McMinnville as it provides stop gap infrastructure funding for housing projects that are ready to proceed but cannot afford the public infrastructure needed to support the project, and it guarantees that 30% of the housing built in these housing developments will be set aside for households earning 130% of area median income or less, which is workforce housing. This bill will enable immediate housing production that are currently stalled to be developed, and it ensures that a portion of that housing will be in the niche of housing that is not currently being built in Oregon communities – workforce housing.

Many small communities like McMinnville do not have access to the financial resources of larger communities to help offset public infrastructure costs for low and moderate-income household infrastructure (for example, annual Community Development Block Grants) and as a result these communities are witnessing mostly subsidized housing for very low income households and higher-income housing production, creating supply issues for workforce housing. Lack of workforce housing is impacting the ability of critical services like our hospitals, schools, government, and businesses to recruit, hire and retain workforce.

In McMinnville, we have an approved housing subdivision with 290 lots that are located in Zone 2 of our water conveyance plan. This zone needs \$2,000,000 of pump station equipment and pipes in order to bring water to the approved subdivision. The improvements have been engineered and the tentative subdivision plan is approved. If funded this project would be able to proceed immediately into infrastructure installation, platting and housing production. Each lot in the subdivision is allowed to have up to four housing units per lot.

We thank Representative Elmer for her hard work on this bill and all of her colleagues that have endorsed this effort and urge your support of this very important housing bill – HB 4134.



Kellie Menke (McMinnville City Council)
Chair of the McMinnville Affordable Housing Task Force