

Submitter: Rich Peppers
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development
Measure: SB1537
Subject: HB 1537
Please oppose

Dear Chairperson Jama, Vice-Chairperson Anderson and members of the Committee,

My name is Rich Peppers, I live in Portland's Montavilla Neighborhood with my family, and I am a retiree. I'm not a born-and-bred Oregonian, but I have lived here for 39 years, after moving here most immediately from the Midwest. Some of my main reasons for making Oregon my home state had to do with Oregon's beautiful environment and Oregonians' clear willingness to protect that environment from over-development.

I urge you to oppose SB 1537 until and unless it is amended to remove the expansion of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). I realize and appreciate that this bill is in other respects a good bill that offers important solutions to the two related priority issues of homelessness and behavioral/mental health concerns. However, protecting the UGB and with it our state's land use principles from constant threats of erosion is also a very high priority. It is a cornerstone element in accomplishing many of our state's goals:

- * It protects undeveloped land outside the UGB from development, whether farmland or natural lands, which allows it to perform its roles in food production or clean air creation..

- * It requires us to develop our urban areas denser, not as sprawl outwards - which aids in the furtherance of walkable/bikeable climate-friendly communities with more efficient public transit. This helps reduce our transportation system's climate impact and the pressure to build ever more new highways.

- * It reduces the total costs of new housing development because the infrastructure of roads, utilities, sewers, and public transit already exists inside most of the UGB area but often not yet outside.

I urge you to oppose HB 1537 until the UGB expansion section can be amended out. Thank you for your work on serving the public.

