

Submitter: Estelle Voeller

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB1537

Chair Jama and Members of the Senate Committee on Housing and Development
Re: SB1537

I strongly support most provisions of this bill, and commend all the effort in crafting it to address one of Oregon's most serious needs - sufficient stock of climate-smart and affordable housing. As a taxpayer, I am willing to help pay for infrastructure support, grants to incorporate energy-efficient design, appliances, HAPO to expedite coordination and support to address this basic need so many fellow Oregonians face.

What leads me to oppose this bill is the disregarding of Oregon's unique land-use laws and the proposed allowance of UGB expansions. I was secretary to the Jackson County Planning Commission when these laws were going through adoption and refinement. UGB are there for reasons. Is there really not sufficient designated land within the UGB? Many cities have vacant, underutilized land and buildings. Shouldn't an entity first have to prove a lack of UGB-available land? I'm also deeply concerned about climate change and our need to quickly transition to more climate-friendly practices. In-fill is one of them. By all means, agricultural lands need to be protected.

I understand two-thirds of the needed housing is for low and moderate income folks, but only 30% of affordable housing in any project is required. Might that requirement be increased?

The rest of the bill I support, and appreciate your tackling and addressing the serious need for affordable housing.

Thank you for your consideration.