

Submitter: Twila Petrie
On Behalf Of: AHC
Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2138

Please remove Section 22(1)(f) from HB2138-1. The intent of HB 2138 is to create more middle housing in Oregon, which I generally support. As written, middle or affordable housing is not required as a condition for removing demolition review.

The following list outlines in detail why this section is counter-productive to the rest of the bill:

- Demolition review does NOT equal automatic demolition denial. It is a weighing of the public benefit of retention vs replacement.
- Demolition review is the only protection we offer in Oregon - to remove it will nullify Oregon's Land Use Goal 5 for historic resources.
- Removing demolition review denies the public a voice (counter to State Land Use Goal 1). The community or stakeholder group should have an opportunity to weigh in on places that matter to them and reflect their heritage. Should the developer be the only voice?
- The Demolition Review process has been shown to balance the public benefit and often times has helped create more housing, not hindering it.
- As written, Section 22(1)(f) has no requirement that middle housing or affordable housing replace the demolished historic structure. It has NO connection to the bill's goal.
- Historic designation requires rigorous research and vetting to prove cultural significance. They should not be erased without careful consideration.
- No protection + no restoration & reuse incentives means Oregon is dead last in the U.S. for stewardship of its heritage places
- Demolition is forever and more demolition works against our climate goals
- Contributing structures play a vital role in maintaining the historical integrity and character of a district. Removing or altering them can change the district's historical narrative and erode its authenticity.
- We can move the needle for increased housing in heritage areas by creating an inclusive "both-and" strategy that would add more units within designated historic areas through an incentive package for adapting existing residential, to multi-unit housing in non-contributing properties, adding ADU's, offering affordability incentives to retain existing affordable heritage properties and more.
- Low-carbon strategies that add affordable housing should be a priority for climate action over climate-impactful demolition and resource-intensive costly new construction whenever possible. Oregon needs all the tools in our toolbox for housing including a state rehab tax incentive that 39 other states use.