

Submitter: Theo Hathaway Saner
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2138
Subject: Support for Section 22(1)(f) in HB 2138 – Prioritizing Affordable Housing Over Exclusionary Zoning

Dear Members of the Oregon Legislature,

I am writing to express my strong support for Section 22(1)(f) of HB 2138, which is essential for ensuring that historic district designations are not misused to obstruct the development of affordable housing.

Portland and the state of Oregon are facing a severe housing crisis, and we need policies that prioritize people over preservationist barriers that have historically restricted diverse housing opportunities. While historic districts can serve an important cultural role, they should not be weaponized to block housing solutions in high-opportunity neighborhoods like Laurelhurst.

Why Section 22(1)(f) Matters

- ? Prevents the misuse of historic designations to exclude lower-income households from high-resource areas.
- ? Encourages equitable growth by allowing more diverse housing options in neighborhoods with good schools, transit, and amenities.
- ? Supports Oregon's housing goals by ensuring historic districts do not become a loophole for blocking affordability initiatives.

HB 2138 is meant to expand access to housing—and that cannot happen if outdated zoning policies and historic overlays continue to serve as barriers to progress. I urge you to protect and pass Section 22(1)(f) so that we can build a more inclusive and affordable Oregon.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration.

Sincerely,
Theo Hathaway Saner
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