

Submitter: Lynn Daue

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2138

Good afternoon. I am writing in opposition of HB 2138, specifically Section 22 (1)(f), which proposes to repeal demolition review for homes listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

My family and I are lucky enough to reside in Laurelhurst, an area of town with century-plus old homes in a wide variety of styles. The disjointed nature of architecture within Laurelhurst is baffling until one learns that many of the homes are the result of American soldiers coming home from serving in World War II. They were inspired by European architecture, and armed with greater economic power, they built homes reflecting their time overseas.

Our home, built in the 1910s, sits on a plot of land that was originally granted by Andrew Jackson. We lovingly call it "the little house on the street," because from the front, it looks significantly smaller than the surrounding homes. We were surprised that we were able to get into the neighborhood at all, because the average cost of a home in Laurelhurst when we moved in was about \$1,000,000, which was out of our price range. Part of the reason we were able to afford to move into the neighborhood is because we chose an older home that needed significant work done. The seller had actually already accepted an offer that fell through; the buyers intended to do major construction, and possibly demolish the home.

Many of the homes around us are the original structures. Some are not. The most recent addition to our neighborhood—a \$1M luxury home built on a newly split lot—illustrates how development trends often prioritize high-end housing over true affordability. As outlined in the letter from Kayleen Kusterer, Laurelhurst Neighborhood Association President, developers tend to place a priority on replacing older homes with luxury ones like our newer addition. These actions damage the uniqueness and affordability of neighborhoods like Laurelhurst, and keep middle-income families out of historic neighborhoods.

I do not oppose HB 2138 in full. There is a critical need for affordable housing in Portland. However, I believe that allowing developers to bypass demolition review will have negative consequences on the efforts to expand affordable housing. I urge you to remove Section 22 (1)(f) and pursue policies that promote affordable housing while preserving our city's historic character.

Respectfully submitted,
Lynn Daue