

Submitter: Chet Orloff

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2138

Honorable Members of the House Legislative Assembly:

While I generally agree with the tenor of House Bill 2138, I believe that, by (1) allowing housing to expand into unincorporated lands and (2) by limiting demolition review, we are allowing the apocryphal "fox into the henhouse." As someone long interested in the preservation of our great state and its invaluable lands and landscape, I have long studied, taught, and seen how planners can misunderstand and misuse the actual abundant lands inside our urban growth boundaries (UGBs).

We have enough land within our UGBs, for social and economic purposes. We simply don't use it well. I know this because I have both taught planning and served as a member of Portland's planning and landmarks commissions (among other public bodies). You can require the economists on the Oregon government's staff to provide you with adequate information on this matter. This may appear to be the solution in the short run, but it will soon become clear that by allowing too-easy expansion is not a solution our towns and state can afford.

Of course we need to expand housing within urban areas of Oregon. We can do so without the need of expanding such housing into unincorporated lands. We need to be creative, while thinking and working harder, on this vital matter. Figure out the ways in which development can occur within already used spaces. You, as individuals in leadership positions, can show our counties and municipalities how to do this. But please don't take the usual, and seemingly easy, way out. Don't allow housing to be "easily" expanded into unincorporated lands. This will be a folly that future generations will mightily regret.

Thank you.

CHET ORLOFF

Director Emeritus, Oregon Historical Society