

Submitter: Paul Majkut

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2138

Section 22(1)(f) of HB 2138 currently requires (f) "Repealing requirements for demolition review for houses listed in the National Register of Historic Places." Oregon has over 138 National Register Historic Districts and thousands of designated homes across our state. So this section of the bill, if retained, would greatly impact these historic places, potentially leading to unrestricted demolition. This new rule would eliminate the minimal protection of a process that is designed to review and balance the needs of local communities and their historic homes and places.

Repealing requirements for demolition review for houses listed in the National Register of Historic Places will discourage the preservation, restoration, and adaptive reuse of historic homes and places that helps respond to the pressing housing challenges Oregon faces by:

- Reducing demolition and the wasting of precious materials and craftsmanship
- Lowering CO2 emissions
- Creating more jobs than new construction
- Providing affordable space for small and minority-owned businesses
- Accommodating affordable housing, especially for families. The most affordable home is already standing!
- Allowing greater density while retaining architectural and cultural heritage.

Retention of Section 22(1)(f) of HB 2138 discourages preservation, restoration, and adaptive reuse of historic homes and places in direct conflict with Oregon's Land Use Goal 5 for historic resources. The Goal 5 rule stipulates that removal is authorized only in cases where a resource has been altered such that it lost its significance, it was mistakenly designated, or in limited circumstances relating to owner consent.

As Professor Loren Lutzenhiser in his November 16, 2016 testimony to the Portland City Council on the Residential Infill Program (RIP) RIP observed:

“There has long been considerable support for demolition and new construction because of the large profits and resource flows involved for developers, builders, investors, and city agencies. Renovation and retrofit solutions need comparable support from environmental actors, affordability advocates and Portland residents committed to sustainable solutions. Advocacy is needed for a better balance of community versus economic benefits and needs.”

Retaining demolition review for historic resources does NOT equal automatic demolition denial. It is a weighing of the public benefit of retention vs replacement.

This is important because as a society we should weigh the fact that new housing unnecessarily increases global warming. In his Nov. 16, 2016 statement to the

Portland City Council on the Residential Infill Program (RIP), former PSU Professor

Lutzenhiser found: “Our demolition and new construction carbon emissions estimate

is in the neighborhood of 47,000 pounds of CO₂ emitted in the demo-construction process. The estimate for a major energy retrofit of an existing house is about 1,500 pounds (about 1/30th as much), and building a new ADU is estimated to produce around 12,000 pounds of CO₂.” He also found that “renovation of existing dwellings (rather than demolishing them), and adding ADUs to those and additional sites, would achieve the same density as demolition” – with duplex and ADU replacement — “at about 15 percent of the total cost to the households involved.”

The beneficiaries of Section 22(1)(f) of HB 2138 will be the home builders and developers as they tear down historic resources for more development, none of which will even come close to being affordable. Instead, retain the requirement for demolition review and create a better inclusive “both-and” strategy that would add more units within designated historic areas through an incentive package for adapting existing residential, add ADUs, and add triplexes on non-contributing properties. Finally, some mechanism must also be put in place for requiring affordability of the replacement dwelling units.