

Submitter: Davod Binnig

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2138

Dear Chair Marsh and committee members,

I'm writing to express my support for HB 2138, including section 22(1)(f). Oregon's housing crisis has been one of the greatest challenges facing the state for years, and this bill to address obstacles to building the homes we need in our cities is a necessary step forward.

I appreciate older homes; I live in a 1916 house in a streetcar-era neighborhood of Portland. But Oregon's current administrative rules create a sweeping demolition review requirement not just for notably historic individual buildings, but for all contributing structures in NRHP districts, with decisions applying to hundreds of properties made at one stroke by a state office with no responsiveness to local voters and no capacity to consider local housing needs.

The National Register was never designed to turn entire neighborhoods into museums. Applying a blanket demolition review requirement to hundreds of properties at a time short-circuits cities' ability to make their own planning decisions in response to local needs, and makes it harder to expand opportunities to live in our communities—shutting people out of the very areas likely to be closest to jobs and transportation.

Oregon should support opportunities for more people to live where they choose and give cities the flexibility to weigh preservation and housing needs by passing HB 2138, including section 22(1)(f).