

Submitter: Matchu Williams

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2138

2025 March 3rd

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Dear Chair Marsh and Members of the House Committee on Housing and Homelessness,

I am writing in support of House Bill 2138 in the 2025 Regular Session and ensure that historic districts do not keep us from creating enough housing for all Oregonians.

It is my hope to see a future where every Oregonian has access to a variety of housing choices, styles, and range of prices where they would like to live for both current and future residents. Currently there are multiple barriers which prevent us from realizing this vision. The Oregon Housing Committee on Housing and Homelessness has an opportunity before yourselves today to change that by advancing HB2138.

According to Oregon's State of the State's Housing 2024 report, over 500,000 housing units must be built over the next two decades to meet our projected population growth. Recent population growth within Oregon during the past decade has lagged national development patterns and contributed to increases in the cost of housing. Delays add further costs as labor costs have accelerated since the onset of the pandemic in 2020. This situation is untenable and contrary to the vision of an Oregon where everyone has a place to call home. These delays add onto the cost of both new and existing housing and the supply of housing is unable to meet the demands generated by new residents moving here.

I urge the committee and state to prioritize housing for people during the housing crisis. Demolition delays add to the costs of building the housing our communities need and create market pressures on adjacent neighborhoods which lack such designations. Within the City of Portland, high opportunity neighborhoods served by transit and services can circumvent the local planning framework by seeking historic district designation. This creates pressures to develop adjacent neighborhoods to address the shortage. This undermines the community planning framework to holistically address the housing shortage that the state and our community face.

I urge the committee to retain the language in Section 22 (1). It is undemocratic,

creates delays in addressing the housing crisis, and contrary to an Oregon for all. Historic buildings and resources are already allowed elsewhere. Thank you for your support and consideration.

Respectfully,
Matchu Williams