

Submitter: Jacob Apenes

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2138

Hello House Committee On Housing and Homelessness,

For the record, my name is Jacob Apenes. I'm 26 years old, a resident of Portland, Oregon and I'm here to voice my support for House Bill 2138. In particular, I'm most excited about the policy that removes the demolition review requirement in undemocratic National Register Historic Districts.

I live in the Sabin neighborhood, a beautiful neighborhood in North East Portland. Sabin is well connected, with a grid of sidewalks that makes it easy to wander on foot. I live two blocks from Alberta Street, where a collection of grocery stores, restaurants, and art galleries procure a creative and bustling community. My housemate, Tyler, also works at one of the coffee shops on Alberta and supplies me with free caffeine whenever I please. It's a wonderful place to live. It's also expensive.

Although my three-bedroom home was built in 1910, our rent is still over \$3300 dollars per month. Now \$1100 per bedroom may seem affordable to some given that new one-bedroom apartments in Portland are going for over \$1700 on average, but it definitely doesn't feel affordable, especially if your job is coffee barista. The reason Tyler and I can live together is because I'm fortunate to have a job that pays well and am able to cover a part of his rent.

And there's no doubt in my mind: paying a little extra each month to live with one of my closest friends has been one of the best decisions I've ever made. Tyler is such an outstanding, warm, and caring human. He's not afraid to connect; to ask about your life and learn who you really are. You can meet him only once and he'll treat you like he's known you forever. And he'll invite you over for dinner too—on those Wednesdays he has off of work. Our home, and my life, is better with Tyler in it.

More people should be able to have a Tyler in their life, and we can make that happen by building many more homes in places with good access to jobs, parks, bustling businesses, transit, and schools. Unfortunately, required demolition reviews make it very difficult to build new housing in certain neighborhoods marked as National Register Historic Districts. Fortunately, the Sabin neighborhood is not a historic district, but it could gain that distinction by a small group of property owners who submit my neighborhood to the National Register.

Sabin has homes as old as buildings in National Register Historic Districts and could very well be designated as a historic district. However, we shouldn't allow a small

minority of property owners to weaponize National Register Historic Districts and make it harder for new people to move into my neighborhood or for current residents to stay. It's not in our interests to prevent Tyler and I from finding affordable rent because some guy doesn't want to see a fourplex built near his home. That anti-housing preference is the whole reason we're in a housing crisis in the first place.

I urge you as a committee to support House Bill 2138 and I plead for your good conscience to stop the abuse of undemocratic historic districts. My housing future, Tyler's housing future, and our state's housing future hinges on your ability to pass policies such as this one to deliver the housing abundance we need.

Thank you very much,

Jacob Apenes