

Submitter: Collin Rickford

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2138

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

My name is Collin Rickford and I live in NE Portland. I join Portland: Neighbors Welcome in supporting House Bill 2138, which will positively affect Oregon's housing shortage by legalizing more housing across the state with land already available in our cities and towns and cutting red tape that prevents working families from choosing homes that allow them to live affordably in their own communities.

I chose to live in Portland specifically because I value living in a walkable and bikeable city with good public transit options. Unfortunately, I know many people who would also like to live here but are forced to move further out into the suburbs due to very high housing costs and insufficient supply. In these suburban areas, the only way to get around is by car - and car dependence is not a choice when there is no viable alternative. By removing barriers to building more types of housing and increasing housing density in Portland neighborhoods, this bill will allow more people to afford housing here and not be constrained to car dependence.

Specifically, this bill will help people live near jobs that invest in their community, create opportunities for more people who want to become homeowners, allow more people to stay in their communities as they age, and make use of vacant lots to help neighborhoods be vibrant.

I also specifically urge the committee to retain the language in SECTION 22. (1), which repeals the requirement for demolition review for houses which are listed as "contributing" in National Register Historic Districts. Undemocratic and landowner-controlled National Register of Historic Places districts are distinct from local historic districts that have democratic oversight from a body — the city council — that is legally allowed to consider any factors other than historic preservation, and can consider the interests of tenants as well as landowners. This bill retains Oregon cities' ability to preserve historical resources and does not impact local historic districts, but grants cities the flexibility they need to address our ongoing housing crisis and ensure that we can build housing for Oregonians of all ages, wages, and stages of life.

Thank you.