



Disability  
Rights  
Oregon



March 4, 2025

Rep. Pam Marsh, Chair, and Members  
House Committee on Housing and Homelessness  
State Capitol  
Salem, OR

Re: Support for HB 2138

Chair Marsh and Committee Members:

We, the undersigned organizations, which provide direct services and advocate alongside people with disabilities and older adults, **support HB 2138**, as modified by the -1 amendment, to address barriers to the production of middle housing.

The housing needs of people with disabilities (PWD) and older adults have never been sufficiently addressed in Oregon. While the Census Bureau estimates that 16% of Oregonians have disabilities, the building codes require full accessibility in just 2% of units – and this requirement is only applicable to buildings with 20 or more units. Additionally—as noted by [Portland State University's Population Research Center](#)—Oregon continues to grow older with the biggest gains in our oldest cohorts, which will contribute to the number and proportion of Oregonians with disabilities. Further, no accessibility requirements apply to developments of fewer than four units.

Far too often, PWD and older adults who would benefit from accessible housing are unable to locate housing that meets their needs, creating additional stress for these individuals, friends and family members who support them, and the disability and aging services systems. Without prompt action, the problem is likely to grow significantly worse as our population ages and acquires more disabilities.

Many PWD prefer middle housing over housing options where they share multiple walls with their neighbors. Cottage cluster and detached ADUs, in particular, help reduce exposure to noise, perfumes, and other stimuli that can increase anxiety or activate sensory sensitivities. Parents of PWD frequently report concern about being evicted from multifamily housing due to noise related to disability. While the Fair Housing Act protects against such evictions, living in detached housing can help prevent these challenges altogether. [Middle housing also supports social connectedness and physical and mental health](#), which are important factors contributing to quality of life and well-being.

In addition, HB 2138-1 provides a density bonus for homeownership units that are affordable or meet Type A accessibility requirements. We broadly support efforts to increase the number of accessible and

affordable homes. Yet, we would like to note that the needs for accessibility and affordability are interconnected in the disability community, as limited employment opportunities and resource limits for Medicaid services—including in-home care—often limit PWD to deeply affordable units. As currently written, the accessible homes will likely benefit families with disabilities or aging adults the most.

As the state continues to take steps toward addressing the long-standing accessibility barriers faced by people with disabilities and older adults in Oregon’s housing market, HB 2138-1’s incentives for accessible and affordable middle housing would provide much-needed options that support independent living and community integration. We look forward to continued discussions of this bill to help ensure that all Oregonians, regardless of ability, have access to housing that meets their needs.

Sincerely,

Allen Hines  
Housing Access Director, Community Vision

On behalf of:

Community Vision  
Disability Rights Oregon  
Northwest Pilot Project  
Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition  
Rogue Valley Council of Governments Area Agency on Aging for Jackson and Josephine Counties