

Senate Bill 1551

Sponsored by Senators GELSER BLOUIN, GOLDEN; Senators BROADMAN, PHAM K, PROZANSKI, Representatives FRAGALA, MCDONALD (Presession filed.)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**. The statement includes a measure digest written in compliance with applicable readability standards.

Digest: This Act stops HOAs or deed terms from limiting an owner from upgrading the fire safety of materials in their home. (Flesch Readability Score: 60.6).

Invalidates deed restrictions and planned community governing documents prohibiting the removal of nonfire-hardened building materials or installation of fire-hardened building materials on residential properties. Limits a homeowners association's ability to enforce regulations that would constrain installation of fire-hardened building materials. Applies to new and existing deed restrictions and planned communities.

Takes effect on the 91st day following adjournment sine die.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

Relating to fire hardening of residential properties; creating new provisions; amending ORS 94.572, 94.573 and 94.630; and prescribing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. Section 2 of this 2026 Act is added to and made a part of ORS chapter 93.

SECTION 2. (1) As used in this section, "fire-hardened building materials" means materials that meet any of the following criteria as most recently adopted as of the effective date of this 2026 Act:

(a) The ignition-resistant construction criteria set forth in sections 504 to 506 of the International Wildland-Urban Interface Code;

(b) The criteria for construction in wildland areas set forth in the National Fire Protection Association Standard 1140, and the criteria for reducing structure ignition hazards from wildland fire set forth in the most recent version of the National Fire Protection Association Standard 1144; or

(c) The criteria included within a wildfire-prepared home as established by the Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety.

(2) A provision in a recorded document, including a declaration as defined in ORS 94.550, is void and unenforceable to the extent that the provision would:

(a) Prohibit the installation, use or maintenance of fire-hardened building materials on a residential property; or

(b) Prohibit the removal of materials that are not fire-hardened building materials, including fences and other structures, from a residential property.

SECTION 3. Section 4 of this 2026 Act is added to and made a part of ORS 94.550 to 94.783.

SECTION 4. (1) A provision in a planned community's governing documents is void and unenforceable to the extent that it:

(a) Prohibits the removal of materials that are not fire-hardened building materials as defined in section 2 of this 2026 Act; or

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

(b) Limits the design, dimensions, placement, maintenance or external appearance of fire-hardened building materials in a way that:

(A) Has the practical effect of prohibiting the use of all fire-hardened building materials; or

(B) Requires the use of fire-hardened building materials that cost more than 10 percent above other fire-hardened building materials of similar or lesser quality than the materials proposed by the owner.

(2) If an owner applies to install fire-hardened building materials or remove nonfire-hardened building materials under this section, the application is deemed approved unless the association denies or requests modifications to the application in a written opinion that:

(a) Is delivered within 60 days after the application is filed;

(b) Demonstrates in reasonable detail the basis for the denial and the scope of any necessary modifications; and

(c) Is not arbitrary or capricious.

SECTION 5. ORS 94.572 is amended to read:

94.572. (1) A Class I or Class II planned community created before January 1, 2002, that was not created under ORS 94.550 to 94.783 is subject to this section and ORS 94.550, 94.573, 94.574, 94.576, 94.577, 94.590, 94.595 (5) to (9), 94.625, 94.626, 94.630 (1), (3) and (4), 94.639, 94.640, 94.641, 94.642, 94.644, 94.645, 94.647, 94.650, 94.652, 94.655, 94.657, 94.658, 94.660, 94.661, 94.662, 94.665, 94.670, 94.675, 94.676, 94.680, 94.690, 94.695, 94.704, 94.709, 94.712, 94.716, 94.719, 94.723, 94.728, 94.733, 94.762, 94.770, 94.775, 94.777, 94.779 and 94.780 **and section 4 of this 2026 Act** to the extent that those statutes are consistent with any governing documents of the planned community.

(2) If the governing documents of a planned community described in subsection (1) of this section do not provide for the formation of a homeowners association, the requirements of this section are not effective until the formation of an association in accordance with ORS 94.574.

(3) If a provision of the governing documents of a planned community described in subsection (1) of this section is inconsistent with this section, the owners may amend the governing documents using the procedures in ORS 94.573.

SECTION 6. ORS 94.573 is amended to read:

94.573. (1)(a)(A) The owners in a Class I or Class II planned community created before January 1, 2002, that was not created under ORS 94.550 to 94.783 may amend any provision of the planned community's governing documents to conform with this section and ORS 94.550, 94.572, 94.574, 94.576, 94.590, 94.595 (5) to (9), 94.625, 94.626, 94.630 (1), (3) and (4), 94.639, 94.640, 94.641, 94.642, 94.644, 94.645, 94.647, 94.650, 94.652, 94.655, 94.657, 94.658, 94.660, 94.661, 94.662, 94.665, 94.670, 94.675, 94.676, 94.680, 94.690, 94.695, 94.704, 94.709, 94.712, 94.716, 94.719, 94.723, 94.728, 94.733, 94.762, 94.770, 94.775, 94.777, 94.779 and 94.780 **and section 4 of this 2026 Act**.

(B) An amendment to any provision of a planned community's governing documents made pursuant to this paragraph must be executed in accordance with the procedures for the adoption of amendments prescribed by, and subject to any limitations specified in, the planned community's governing documents.

(C) Nothing in this section or ORS 94.572 requires the owners to amend a declaration or bylaws to include the information required by ORS 94.580 or 94.635.

(b) If a planned community's governing documents do not provide procedures to amend the provisions of the governing documents:

(A) The owners may amend the inconsistent provisions of a governing document other than by-

laws to conform with this section and ORS 94.550, 94.572, 94.574, 94.576, 94.590, 94.595 (5) to (9), 94.625, 94.626, 94.630 (1), (3) and (4), 94.639, 94.640, 94.641, 94.642, 94.644, 94.645, 94.647, 94.650, 94.652, 94.655, 94.657, 94.658, 94.660, 94.661, 94.662, 94.665, 94.670, 94.675, 94.676, 94.680, 94.690, 94.695, 94.704, 94.709, 94.712, 94.716, 94.719, 94.723, 94.728, 94.733, 94.762, 94.770, 94.775, 94.777 and 94.780 **and section 4 of this 2026 Act** by a vote of at least 75 percent of the owners in the planned community.

(B) The owners may amend the inconsistent provisions of the bylaws to conform with this section and ORS 94.550, 94.572, 94.574, 94.576, 94.590, 94.595 (5) to (9), 94.625, 94.626, 94.630 (1), (3) and (4), 94.639, 94.640, 94.641, 94.642, 94.644, 94.645, 94.647, 94.650, 94.652, 94.655, 94.657, 94.658, 94.660, 94.661, 94.662, 94.665, 94.670, 94.675, 94.676, 94.680, 94.690, 94.695, 94.704, 94.709, 94.712, 94.716, 94.719, 94.723, 94.728, 94.733, 94.762, 94.770, 94.775, 94.777, 94.779, and 94.780 **and section 4 of this 2026 Act** by a vote of at least a majority of the owners in the planned community.

(C) The owners may adopt an amendment to the provisions of a governing document at a meeting held in accordance with the governing documents or by another procedure permitted by the governing documents that follows the procedures prescribed in ORS 94.647, 94.650 or 94.660.

(2) The owners of a planned community described in subsection (1) of this section shall execute, certify and record an amendment adopted pursuant to subsection (1) of this section to:

(a) A recorded declaration as provided in ORS 94.590 (2), (3) and (5).

(b) The bylaws or any other governing document as provided in ORS 94.590 (3). If the bylaws or other governing document to which the amendment relates were recorded, the owners shall cause an amendment to the bylaws or other governing document to be recorded in the office of the recording officer of every county in which the planned community is located.

(3) An amendment adopted pursuant to subsection (1) of this section shall include:

(a) A reference to the recording index numbers and date of recording of the governing document, if recorded, to which the amendment relates; and

(b) A statement that the amendment is adopted.

SECTION 7. ORS 94.630 is amended to read:

94.630. (1) Subject to subsection (2) of this section and ORS 94.762, 94.763, 94.776, 94.778 and 94.779 **and section 4 of this 2026 Act**, and except as otherwise provided in its declaration or bylaws, a homeowners association may:

(a) Adopt and amend bylaws, rules and regulations for the planned community;

(b) Adopt and amend budgets for revenues, expenditures and reserves, and collect assessments from owners for common expenses and the reserve account established under ORS 94.595;

(c) Hire and terminate managing agents and other employees, agents and independent contractors;

(d) Defend against any claims, proceedings or actions brought against it;

(e) Subject to subsection (4) of this section, initiate or intervene in litigation or administrative proceedings in its own name and without joining the individual owners in the following:

(A) Matters relating to the collection of assessments and the enforcement of governing documents;

(B) Matters arising out of contracts to which the association is a party;

(C) Actions seeking equitable or other nonmonetary relief regarding matters that affect the common interests of the owners, including but not limited to the abatement of nuisance;

(D) Matters, including but not limited to actions for damage, destruction, impairment or loss of use, relating to or affecting:

1 (i) Individually owned real property, the expenses for which, including maintenance, repair or
 2 replacement, insurance or other expenses, the association is responsible; or

3 (ii) Common property;

4 (E) Matters relating to or affecting the lots or interests of the owners including but not limited
 5 to damage, destruction, impairment or loss of use of a lot or portion thereof, if:

6 (i) Resulting from a nuisance or a defect in or damage to common property or individually
 7 owned real property, the expenses for which, including maintenance, repair or replacement, insur-
 8 ance or other expenses, the association is responsible; or

9 (ii) Required to facilitate repair to any common property; and

10 (F) Any other matter to which the association has standing under law or pursuant to the dec-
 11 laration or bylaws;

12 (f) Make contracts and incur liabilities;

13 (g) Regulate the use, maintenance, repair, replacement and modification of common property;

14 (h) Cause additional improvements to be made as a part of the common property;

15 (i) Acquire, hold, encumber and convey in its own name any right, title or interest to real or
 16 personal property, except that common property may be conveyed or subjected to a security interest
 17 only pursuant to ORS 94.665;

18 (j) Grant easements, leases, licenses and concessions through or over the common property as
 19 provided in ORS 94.665;

20 (k) Modify, close, remove, eliminate or discontinue the use of common property, including any
 21 improvement or landscaping, regardless of whether the common property is mentioned in the decla-
 22 ration, provided that:

23 (A) Nothing in this paragraph is intended to limit the authority of the association to seek ap-
 24 proval of the modification, closure, removal, elimination or discontinuance by the owners; and

25 (B) Modification, closure, removal, elimination or discontinuance other than on a temporary
 26 basis of any swimming pool, spa or recreation or community building must be approved by at least
 27 a majority of owners voting on the matter at a meeting or by written ballot held in accordance with
 28 the declaration, bylaws or ORS 94.647;

29 (L) Impose and receive any payments, fees or charges for the use, rental or operation of the
 30 common property and services provided to owners;

31 (m) Adopt rules regarding the termination of utility services paid for out of assessments of the
 32 association and access to and use of recreational and service facilities available to owners. The
 33 rules must provide for written notice and an opportunity to be heard before the association may
 34 terminate the rights of any owners to receive the benefits or services until the correction of any
 35 violation covered by the rule has occurred;

36 (n) Impose charges for late payment of assessments and attorney fees related to the collection
 37 of assessments and, after giving written notice and an opportunity to be heard, levy reasonable fines
 38 for violations of the declaration, bylaws, rules and regulations of the association, provided that the
 39 charge imposed or the fine levied by the association is based:

40 (A) On a schedule contained in the declaration or bylaws, or an amendment to either that is
 41 delivered to each lot, mailed to the mailing address of each lot or mailed to the mailing addresses
 42 designated in writing by the owners; or

43 (B) On a resolution of the association or its board of directors that is delivered to each lot,
 44 mailed to the mailing address of each lot or mailed to the mailing addresses designated in writing
 45 by the owners;

1 (o) Impose reasonable charges for the preparation and recordation of amendments to the decla-
2 ration;

3 (p) Provide for the indemnification of its officers and the board of directors and maintain li-
4 ability insurance for directors and officers;

5 (q) Assign its right to future income, including the right to receive common expense assess-
6 ments; and

7 (r) Exercise any other powers necessary and proper for the administration and operation of the
8 association.

9 (2) A declaration may not impose any limitation on the ability of the association to deal with
10 a declarant that is more restrictive than the limitations imposed on the ability of the association to
11 deal with any other person, except during the period of declarant control under ORS 94.600.

12 (3) A permit or authorization, or an amendment, modification, termination or other instrument
13 affecting a permit or authorization, issued by the board of directors that is authorized by law, the
14 declaration or bylaws may be recorded in the deed records of the county in which the planned
15 community is located. A permit or authorization, or an amendment, modification, termination or
16 other instrument affecting a permit or authorization, recorded under this subsection shall:

17 (a) Be executed by the president and secretary of the association and acknowledged in the
18 manner provided for acknowledgment of instruments by the officers;

19 (b) Include the name of the planned community and a reference to where the declaration and
20 any applicable supplemental declarations are recorded;

21 (c) Identify, by the designations stated or referenced in the declaration or applicable supple-
22 mental declaration, all affected lots and common property; and

23 (d) Include other information and signatures if required by law, the declaration, bylaws or the
24 board of directors.

25 (4)(a) Subject to paragraph (f) of this subsection, before initiating litigation or an administrative
26 proceeding in which the association and an owner have an adversarial relationship, the party that
27 intends to initiate litigation or an administrative proceeding shall offer to use any dispute resolution
28 program available within the county in which the planned community is located that is in substan-
29 tial compliance with the standards and guidelines adopted under ORS 36.175. The written offer must
30 be hand-delivered or mailed by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the address, contained in
31 the records of the association, for the other party.

32 (b) If the party receiving the offer does not accept the offer within 10 days after receipt by
33 written notice hand-delivered or mailed by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the address,
34 contained in the records of the association, for the other party, the initiating party may commence
35 the litigation or the administrative proceeding. The notice of acceptance of the offer to participate
36 in the program must contain the name, address and telephone number of the body administering the
37 dispute resolution program.

38 (c) If a qualified dispute resolution program exists within the county in which the planned
39 community is located and an offer to use the program is not made as required under paragraph (a)
40 of this subsection, litigation or an administrative proceeding may be stayed for 30 days upon a mo-
41 tion of the noninitiating party. If the litigation or administrative action is stayed under this para-
42 graph, both parties shall participate in the dispute resolution process.

43 (d) Unless a stay has been granted under paragraph (c) of this subsection, if the dispute resol-
44 ution process is not completed within 30 days after receipt of the initial offer, the initiating party
45 may commence litigation or an administrative proceeding without regard to whether the dispute

resolution is completed.

(e) Once made, the decision of the court or administrative body arising from litigation or an administrative proceeding may not be set aside on the grounds that an offer to use a dispute resolution program was not made.

(f) The requirements of this subsection do not apply to circumstances in which irreparable harm to a party will occur due to delay or to litigation or an administrative proceeding initiated to collect assessments, other than assessments attributable to fines.

SECTION 8. Sections 2 and 4 of this 2026 Act apply to recorded documents and governing documents executed before, on or after the effective date of this 2026 Act.

SECTION 9. This 2026 Act takes effect on the 91st day after the date on which the 2026 regular session of the Eighty-third Legislative Assembly adjourns sine die.