

February 6 2026

Re: HB4035: Expands eligibility criteria so more cities may use one-time UGB expansion path provided in 2024

Dear Rep. Marsh, Rep. Breese-Iverson and the Committee On Housing and Homelessness,

My name is Kathaleen B Parker, from Senate District 10 in South Salem, and I am Neutral (waiting for changes to this bill) I OPPOSE AS CURRENTLY PROPOSED and want Oregon to uphold the integrity of the state's land-use planning program and to oppose measures that threaten it.

What it does: Revises SB1537 to allow more cities to skirt the regular UGB expansion laws and instead use the shortcut provided by SB1537 (2024) by, among other things, allowing expansion on to farm and forest lands in certain circumstances. Also increases allowed size of UGB expansion.

Sprawl vs. Density: These types of expansions encourage urban sprawl and threaten to "pave over" valuable farm and forest land.

Prioritizing Infill: The state should prioritize filling in, redeveloping, and densifying existing urban areas before expanding outward, echoing your call to use existing underutilized buildings.

Developer Benefit: These bills often benefit developers and landowners rather than creating affordable housing, as the cost of new infrastructure often leads to high-end, rather than low-income, housing.

Resource Strain: Expanding UGBs can put pressure on water, infrastructure, and services.

Why it matters: Private land development interests spread falsehoods blaming urban growth boundaries for Oregon's housing needs, to make private land grabs. It is true that Oregon does not have the right amount and diversity of housing types, but a primary reason is that cities have zoned almost exclusively for larger lot, single detached homes for decades, which do not meet the size or cost needs of many, and creates sprawling expensive development patterns to serve. Allowing further urban sprawl onto farm or forest land and natural resource areas is actually the most expensive way to build housing: it requires a full, new set of roads, sewer systems, water pipes, emergency services, and more. It also paves over carbon-sequestering land, much of which is contributing to Oregon's second-largest industry: Agriculture.

Thank you for your time and support,

Kathaleen B Parker, Willamette Valley, Oregon