



Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Anderson, and members of the Senate Committee on Housing and Development:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. Oregon REALTORS® urges you to support SB 1578. SB 1578 is a tightly crafted bill that provides modest but needed flexibility to help Oregon's most rural counties address their housing crisis in ways that make sense for these communities. Oregon's housing crisis is not just an urban problem, and rural communities need solutions tailored to the unique challenges and opportunities they face. SB 1578 is one of those solutions.

SB 1578 allows a county with a population density of less than 30 people per square mile to approve applications to rezone or divide up to 50 acres of land for residential uses.

The housing built under this new flexibility is narrowly tailored. It must have an average density of at least five dwelling units per acre, each dwelling unit must be no more than 1,200 square feet in size, and housing units may not be used for vacation occupancy.

Property owners pursuing housing development under SB 1578 must sign and record a deed restriction acknowledging the protected rights of farm, forest and rangeland practices in the area and prohibiting the owner and the owner's successors in interest from pursuing a cause of action or claim of relief alleging an injury from any farming, forest or rangeland practices if no claim or action is allowed under ORS 30.936 or 30.937 if the farming, forest or rangeland practices are otherwise protected by law.

Counties are required to report annually to DLCD on lands rezoned or housing developed under the provisions of SB 1578.

SB 1578 also increases opportunities for accessory dwelling units in Oregon's rural counties on lands that have already been determined to have poor soil qualities.

We strongly encourage the Committee to support SB 1578 and provide Oregon's most rural counties with additional tools to address their housing crisis. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.