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March 4, 2019

To: House Committee on Agriculture and Land Use  
Representative Brian Clem, Chair  
Members of the Committee

Re: **HB 2003** – Housing Needs Analysis (HNAs) & Other Housing Issues – **Comments**

The League of Women Voters of Oregon first studied land use in 1959 and has been active since in supporting our statewide land use planning program with local implementation. We believe that Goal 1 requires open access to the land use process and that all residents have a stake in the development of their communities. **As we plan our cities, we are deciding where we will all live, work, shop, play and how we'll get there.**

With this testimony we provide general comments since we understand that substantive amendments are forthcoming. We provide these comments in part because we recognize the lack of affordable housing for lower income individuals and families across the state, and the need to provide this housing when the market alone cannot do so. The multiple requirements in this bill have fiscal implications that may affect the ability of this legislature to fund housing for that constituency. With that in mind, we offer the following:

**Section 1** requires the Office of Economic Analysis to “develop and periodically refine a methodology for calculating...a regional housing needs analysis...” based on a number of factors for over 40 cities. We would suggest that the legislature reduce this requirement to one that the state can afford while still providing funding for our lowest income level residents.

**Section 3** requires funding for the Dept. of Land Conservation and Development (DLCDD) to assist certain cities in updating their HNAs every 8 years. Past legislatures have failed to fund the department’s grant program so that cities can do the land use planning work needed. Again, we laud the goal, but caution the amount of funding needed so we can still provide funding for our lowest income level residents.

**Section 4** requires these approximately 40 cities to develop and adopt a housing strategy within 12 months of receiving or adopting its HNA. Until Measures 5 and 50 are addressed to return to cities the funding needed for this important work, many are fiscally strapped. The measure requires possible major zoning actions. It also requires cities to take a series of actions that will take time for the public to weigh in since they may be asked not only to change the zoning in their communities, but to fund the work needed. Again we caution the legislature to consider a reasonable target for this work.

**Sections 5 and 6** again ask local governments to take substantive actions that demand staff work as well as public engagement.

**Section 7** at least acknowledges that a priority should be established to implement any adopted housing strategy. Again, we see the need to more fully fund DLCDD, not only by increased grants monies, but with staffing to assist smaller cities in this work.

**Section 13** usurps a local government, except in limited circumstances, from using property it owns for future needs which can include sewer, water and road infrastructure, police and fire stations and libraries,

among other needs that make a complete community. We were pleased to see that schools are mentioned as part of a community's needs.

**Section 15:** We appreciate that this is a “may” and not a “shall” related to Secretary of State audits.

**Section 18, page 12, lines 29-32** again takes a potshot at our current enforcement mechanism related to land use. The League objects to this provision in this and other legislation this session that tries to reduce public involvement in the land use system.

We provide these comments in order to help as amendments are proffered for this bill. Many of the provisions of this bill mirror comments the League has made in previous sessions related to DLCD's budget. We have also worked to help the public understand the need to address inequities in the property tax system, indeed in our entire revenue structure. As members of the Revenue Coalition, we ask that the legislature address the need for adequate revenue to address all the services Oregonians need. We stand ready to help where we can to move the discussion around the need to be sure all Oregonians have housing. We ask that you consider our comments as this bill is considered for amendment.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.



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CC: Taylor Smiley-Wolfe, Speaker Kotek's Policy Director  
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