

Dear Chair and Committee members,

I do not support the amendments to the bill as they do nothing to change the purpose of the bill which is to proliferate multifamily plexes across the state on each lot. In fact the entire bill should die in committee as it is a terrible idea. The bill would have the state legislature determine the zoning across the state which is a usurpation of local authority of where housing should go and what kind is needed. If implemented it will create a permanent underclass of renters who will have more rental housing to live in but much less housing that they might own. And there are no provisions in the bill which really address affordability. Just multiplying plexes across the state will not ensure affordability.

Single dwelling ownership whether it be townhouses or condos or just a house was intended to provide people with the opportunity to secure the cost of housing which could protect them in retirement from rent increases and give them a chance to manage their financial destiny. Increasing multifamily housing only increases financial instability because the renters are at the mercy of their landlords. Even with rent control. And it will slowly increase our investor owned stock as opposed to homeowner stock. And there is a big difference in the upkeep on investor owned buildings versus homeowner buildings. The neighborhoods reflect the loving care that low density housing has engendered.

This bill will increase the demolition of small houses which are affordable. The little houses in Portland are being replaced by giant duplexes and triplexes which are unaffordable for the average person. In Portland, all corners can be developed as duplexes and almost all lots can have an ADU added. We had, as of 2016, 100,000 vacant lots in Portland that could be developed. So the housing crisis is overrated.

What we need is thoughtful development on our corners, expanded multifamily dwelling zoning in multifamily zoned areas, homes that fit into the height and architectural landscape that already exists and to maintain a zoning and planning policy which interleaved single dwelling housing with plexes and high rises. We need to create density along the corridors and town centers as set out by the 2035 Comp plan with its provisions about when density should be allowed. The UGB may need to be expanded to accommodate the influx of newcomers as well.

Please remember that Metro did a study in 2014 which surveyed people and discovered that 80% of them wanted single dwelling housing-not multifamily. We need more affordable rental housing in some areas but we also need low new density housing as well. My suggestion is this bill be brought up next session when both the state and the cities have time to address the infrastructure problems that density of this kind will create and to look at how to create affordability instead of just market rate housing.

And there is a displacement issue across the state which needs to be researched. Much better than it has been. Cheap land attracts developers who will drive out low income renters and owners who often have no place to go except the fringes of a metropolitan or city area. The Residential Infill Project in Portland barely made it out of the commission because of the displacement issues and other affordability issues. How many of your voters would be displaced because of the incomes they presently enjoy?

Thank you for taking the time to read my comments. This is a very tough issue and your bill does not help solve the problem. Please vote against the amendments and the bill.

Respectfully submitted,

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