



Testimony in Support of HB 2001
June 11, 2019

Senator Manning, Representative Gomberg, Members of the committee.

My name is Ashley Henry. I'm the Executive Director of Business For A Better Portland. We represent over 350 companies and organizations that believe that in order for business to thrive, the community also needs to thrive. That's why we are so supportive of HB 2001 and the opportunity that Oregon has to show leadership on what is really a national housing crisis. Our employees, our neighbors, and our family members need to have choices to rent or buy homes at a variety of sizes, configurations, and price points. The members of Business for a Better Portland recognize that high housing costs and restricted access to neighborhoods near jobs, parks, schools, and grocery stores limit our ability to attract and maintain talent.

With this crisis comes opportunity: to make our cities more equitable, to give middle class people a chance to build wealth, to give cities a way to maximize their investments in infrastructure, and to reduce traffic by allowing more people to live close to where they work.

In every city in the state, neighborhoods with a variety of housing options are essential to maintaining a thriving regional economy. It's not just Portland that needs more housing options. Sherwood, Medford, Eugene, Astoria, Bend, and other communities across the state all face a housing affordability crisis.

By updating residential zoning in cities across the state, we can allow employees to live near their jobs, teachers to live near the schools where they teach, and grandparents to live near their grandchildren. Doing so won't just preserve the character of our neighborhoods, it will make that character stronger.