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February 10, 2020

Rep. Keny-Guyer, Chair  
Committee Members  
House Committee on Human Services and Housing  
State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 4095

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 4095. 1000 Friends of Oregon is a nonprofit, membership organization that works with Oregonians to support livable urban and rural communities; protect family farms, forests and natural areas; and provide transportation and housing choice. In recent legislative sessions, we have worked to pass significant bills that will result in more diverse and affordable housing inside cities and towns across Oregon, including HB 2001 and HB 2003 from last session.

We do not support HB 4095. This bill would allow any city to expand its urban growth boundary (UGB) by up to 50 acres, without following most land use laws, if 30% "of the development" is affordable housing. Therefore, expansion can occur on to most farm and forest lands and natural resource areas, without any showing of need.

The bill language seems unclear as to what "30%" of commercial or industrial development would be in terms of housing and, even if the expansion is mostly residential, whether it is 30% of land area or units. The result could be a small number of units in exchange for waiving land use laws on a large amount of resource lands, for private development.

However, and most significantly, HB 4095 is contrary to the agreement made when HB 4079 passed in 2016. That bill established a pilot project for two cities to undertake up to a 50 acre UGB expansion with requirements for affordable housing and many other conditions. That bill was designed to then lead to an evaluation of whether the pilot program worked to deliver substantial numbers of long-term affordable housing and, if so, what conditions were necessary. And if not, why not? The elements that go into providing affordable housing in an area added to the edge of a UGB are many; among them, new infrastructure costs, labor and construction costs, financing, subsidies for affordable units, land cost, and proximity to others uses. The results of the pilot project will be very helpful in determining the best roles for both public and private action and investment to ensure affordable housing in every community.

Reports on the pilot project's progress must be made regularly to the Legislature, and have. The two pilot cities – Bend and Redmond - are in only the initial stages of planning. Until development occurs, the pilot project concept has not been tested and evaluated, so HB 4095 is both premature and contrary to the previous legislation. We ask that you not pass HB 4095.

Thank you for consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Kyle McCurdy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary Kyle McCurdy  
Deputy Director