

Memo

To: Speaker Tina Kotek, Senator Kayse Jama, Representative Julie Fahey

From: Allan Lazo, Fair Housing Council of Oregon; Mary Kyle McCurdy, 1000 Friends of Oregon; Ariel Nelson, League of Oregon Cities, Jennifer Bragar, Jean Dahlquist, Taylor Smiley Wolfe, Sarah Adams-Schoen, and Edward Sullivan, Housing Land Advocates; Dr. Andres Lopez and Mira Mohsini, Coalition of Communities of Color; Dr. Marisa Zapata, Portland State University; Andrée Tremoulet, Commonworks Consulting

Date: April 7, 2021

RE: Regional Housing Needs Analysis

During the 2019 legislative session, the legislature passed House Bill 2003, which made changes to Oregon's land use planning system with the goal of producing more housing. One requirement in House Bill 2003 was for Oregon Housing and Community Services to conduct a Regional Housing Needs Analysis (RHNA) to estimate Oregon's current shortage of housing and need over the next 20 years. The Bill required the Department of Land Conversation and Development to review the RHNA model against our current localized method for estimating housing need and make a recommendation to the legislature about whether to replace our current local methods for estimating housing need for the purpose of land use planning with a RHNA.

Both OHCS and DLCD engaged stakeholders throughout the HB2003 rulemaking and RHNA report process. As stakeholders who were engaged in the process, we are writing you to affirm DLCD's strong recommendation to implement a RHNA in Oregon. In doing this analysis DLCD found, "that the current system chronically underestimates housing need, especially for lower-income households, does not enforce responsibilities of local governments to comprehensively address housing need, and perpetuates geographic patterns of racial and economic segregation, exclusion, and inequity." Oregon must implement a RHNA as one step towards a more fair and equitable land use planning system in Oregon. Without direction from the legislature, DLCD is not able to move this work forward.

As the 2021 legislative session is well underway, in lieu of DLCD's recommendation to charter a Task Force, we urge the legislature to direct DLCD and OHCS to:

- Finalize a proposed Regional Housing Needs Analysis concept in time for the 2022 legislative session;
- Conduct meaningful stakeholder outreach, especially to communities most impacted by housing discrimination and residential segregation in developing the proposal;
- Leverage local governments expertise to inform the development of a RHNA to make sure it accurately estimates local housing needs and aligns local, regional, and state planning roles.
- Collect data in the process of conducting meaningful stakeholder outreach to inform development of the RHNA and to improve the State's understanding of housing need;
- Document the stakeholder engagement process to ensure transparency and accountability;
- Improve data quality through enhancements to population projections, regions, and information sources on housing and disability, homelessness, and Tribal trust land.

To do this work before the 2022 legislative session, DLCD will need resources to improve data quality and to conduct meaningful stakeholder outreach using an equity framework (funding for translation services, to compensate impacted communities for their expertise.) We encourage you to include direction and resources for DLCD and OHCS in a bill or budget note this session.

We want to thank the Speaker for her leadership as the chief sponsor of House Bill 2003 and Chair Fahey for championing the bill during the 2019 legislative session. The bill has already resulted in changes that have moved the current planning system toward more equitable outcomes through authorizing the pilot Regional Housing Needs Analysis, local Housing Production Strategies and Middle Housing. Through those efforts we have come to realize that our current system perpetuates racial and economic segregation. An essential element of the remedy is to estimate housing needs regionally, with a focus on racial equity and affirmatively furthering fair housing. We urge you to direct DLCD and OHCS to continue this work and to provide them the funding needed to bring the legislature a complete proposal to inform a legislative concept in 2022.

Thank you for considering this request.