



American Planning Association
Oregon Chapter

Creating Great Communities for All

March 4, 2021

House Democratic Leader Barbara Smith Warner, Chair
House Republican Leader Christine Drazan, Vice-Chair
Representative Paul Holvey, Vice-Chair
House Committee On Rules
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Testimony from the Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association in Support of
House Bill 2560

Dear Chair Smith Warner, Vice Chair Drazan, Vice Chair Holvey, and Members of the
Committee:

The Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association (OAPA) supports the passage of HB 2560. Passage of this bill will increase equitable access to public meetings and hearings by requiring all such meetings to be accessible remotely (when reasonably feasible) and allowing the general public to remotely provide oral and written testimony when such testimony is allowed.

OAPA is an independent, statewide, not-for-profit educational organization of more than 800 planners from across the state who work for cities, counties, special districts, state agencies, tribes, community-based organizations, universities, and private firms. We provide leadership in the development of vital communities by advocating excellence in community planning, promoting education and resident empowerment, and providing the tools and support necessary to meet the challenges of growth and change. OAPA supports sustainable communities and works to enhance the quality of life for current and future generations by helping to create and stabilize places that are equitable, healthy, and resilient and provide ongoing economic, environmental, and social benefits.

HB 2560 supports two of OAPA's 2021 Legislative Priorities: "Advocate For Oregon's Planning Program" and "Advance Racial Equity." The bill will advance inclusion and expand opportunity for participation at all phases of the planning process as envisioned by Statewide Planning Goal 1, which calls for "the opportunity for citizens to be involved in all phases of the planning process." Increasing access and opportunities for participation can help elevate the voices of traditionally underrepresented communities.

Our members are often at the forefront of public engagement and observe firsthand the limits to engagement that can occur if participants are required to be physically present. The



allowance of remote participation during the pandemic has led to increased opportunities for a broader range of the public to be engaged. As public entities have already increased their technological capacity to provide remote and electronic access to public meetings, it is common sense to continue this practice post pandemic.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony on HB 2560. OAPA recommends the Committee vote the bill out with a Do Pass recommendation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aaron Ray', is positioned above the name and title of the signatory.

Aaron Ray, AICP, President
Board of Directors

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'Eunice Kim', is positioned above the name and title of the signatory.

Eunice Kim, AICP, Chair
Legislative and Policy Affairs Committee