

I am a clergy person living in NE Bend--represented by Sen. Knopp and Rep. Zika--and I am writing in full support of SB 282. I am pastor to a community of young people, mostly in their 20s and 30s, many with young children, and I myself am a first-time homeowner and young person living in the city with an infant son. Many of the people I love and pastor to are renters. And yet, increasingly, our community is losing some of our brightest leaders to the lure of less expensive housing in other parts of the state and country.

Bend was unaffordable before the pandemic; now, it is almost impossible.

As a clergy person, I aspire to walk the way described by Dr. King when he preached about the "beloved community." It's a reality in which all can thrive because they have what they need to live, work and play to their fullest. Bend is at a crossroads when we must ask: "How can we make sure our young leaders can live and thrive here?"

If we don't pass SB282--and other bills that offer grace and flexibility on the road to recovery from this pandemic--we risk becoming a region and a state where only the wealthiest can reside. This is surely the opposite of the beloved community vision offered to us by the oldest faith traditions.

I respectfully ask you to support this bill. Thank you.

Rev. Erika Spaet