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February 4, 2021

Rep. Julie Fahey, Chair
Committee Members
House Committee on Housing
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 2705 (Accessory Dwelling Units- Rural Residential Lands)

Dear Chair Fahey and Committee Members:

1000 Friends of Oregon is a nonprofit, membership organization that has worked with Oregonians for more than 40 years to support livable urban and rural communities; protect family farms, forests and natural areas; and provide transportation and housing choice.

HB 2705 allows counties to authorize construction of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) on rural residential lands under certain conditions. This bill is the same as SB 695 (Sen. Knopp) and is very similar to SB 385 (Sen. Findley) and SB 391 (Sen. Dembrow). In advance of the 2019 legislative session, Sen Dembrow put together a broad work group to see whether appropriate conditions could be agreed to that would allow some ADUs on rural residential lands. Topics for conditions included septic systems, wildfire risk, siting considerations, size, and more. Sen. Dembrow crafted a bill for the February 2020 session based on that input, reflected to slightly varying degrees in HB 2705 and in the other three bills.

1000 Friends has a couple of remaining concerns with the 4 bills: ensuring that wildfire risk is appropriately addressed, and the broad allowance provided for short term rental use of ADUs. The short-term rental use poses two challenges: it increases the transitory population of those not accustomed to farming practices in farm areas, which we have seen poses conflicts and problems for farmers, and it removes potential long-term rentals from the market that could be used for local workers.

We hope that these four bills can be handled as one bill, including resolving remaining issues that we or others may have. Thank you for consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Kyle McCurdy".

Mary Kyle McCurdy, Deputy Director