



American Planning Association
Oregon Chapter

Creating Great Communities for All

February 23, 2021

Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources

Senator Kathleen Taylor, Co-Chair

Representative Jeff Reardon, Co-Chair

900 Court Street NE

Salem, OR 97301

RE: Testimony from the Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association in Support of Senate Bill 5531

Dear Co-Chairs Taylor and Reardon and Members of the Subcommittee:

The Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association (OAPA) supports the passage of SB 5531. 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.

SB 5531 is the appropriations bill introduced to fund the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA). LUBA's mission is to simplify the appeal process, speed resolution of land use disputes, and provide consistent interpretation of state and local land use laws. LUBA's work benefits community members, land use applicants, and local governments by ensuring more reliable resolution of land use decision appeals that build a consistent body of land use law. The Governor's 2021-2023 Budget for LUBA includes funding for an additional staff attorney. OAPA supports the Governor's budget for LUBA, including the additional staff attorney. It's critical that LUBA have the staffing necessary to ensure the Board continues to provide reliable resolutions of appeals for all parties involved.

One of OAPA's Board adopted Legislative Priorities is "Advocate for the Planning Program." Oregon's planning program helps ensure cities and counties comprehensively plan for today and for future generations. Governments at all levels need funding and resources to support good planning and foster great communities. Supporting the passage of LUBA's budget helps ensure that LUBA has the funding and resources to ensure reliable resolution of land use decision appeals that help build a consistent body of land use law on which communities can rely.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony on SB 5531. OAPA recommends the Committee vote the bill out with a Do Pass recommendation.

Sincerely,

Aaron Ray, AICP, President
Board of Directors

Eunice Kim, AICP, Chair
Legislative and Policy Affairs Committee

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