

Date: June 1, 2023
From: Bob Sallinger, Willamette Riverkeeper
To: House Rules Committee
Re: HB 3414

Dear Chair Fahey and Members of the House Rules Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Willamette Riverkeeper to urge you to accept the -15 amendments to HB 3414 if in fact section 2 of this bill is to move forward at all. We greatly appreciate, in particular, the work of Representative Mark Gamba in advancing critically important changes to this bill to protect our communities, our environment and the integrity of our land use planning system. We also appreciate the work of Representative Rayfield and Representative Dexter in advancing this discussion.

The -13 amendments ameliorate some of the most significant environmental impacts in HB 3414 base bill and also target variances towards the housing types that we most need to address the housing crisis. It eliminates the most egregious elements of the base bill which would have allowed developers building multi-million dollar mansions to run roughshod over core environmental and community protections without demonstrating any public benefit what-so-ever. We strongly favor the -13 amendment over the -14 amendment because the -13 amendment does a better job of targeting the variances towards needed housing types; specifically the -13 amendments do a better job of excluding single family homes from the application of this legislation.

That being said, we still oppose HB 3414, Section 2, with or without amendments. We believe that we can both acknowledge the progress that has been made and still stand on our core principals. The HB 3414 base bill represents one of the most significant attacks on our land use planning system since the system was put in place. It would have represented the largest rollback of urban environmental protections since the land use system was established. It turned its back on decades of environmental progress on urban landscapes as well as current commitments to ensure that environmental benefits accrue in our most marginalized communities. It was an unmitigated giveaway to housing developers at the expense of the health and safety of our environment or our neighborhoods. **There is a danger that by advancing a base bill as extreme as HB 3414, that it makes amendments appear to be reasonable and well-considered when, in fact, they merely head off the most extreme elements of the bill.**

We remain deeply concerned that this legislation will still have major unintended and unconsidered impacts on our urban environments and communities. Our land use codes consist of myriad regulations, many of which apply only in very specific geographies and under very specific circumstances. Many are triggered very infrequently, but when they are triggered are critically important. We still do not believe that the Governor's office or the legislature have adequately considered the vast sweep or regulations impacted by this legislation. We believe

this remains a case in which either a bill targeting specific regulations that demonstrably affect housing availability or requiring local jurisdictions to review their own codes in relation to housing availability, but leaving changes to land use codes to local jurisdictions, would have been more prudent and effective.

Again, we very much appreciate the work of Representative Mark Gamba to improve HB 3414 and recognize the substantial progress that has been made. Representative Gamba's efforts have resulted in a much better bill. We also recognize the urgency of the housing crisis. However, we cannot move to either a supportive or neutral position on HB 3414. Our land use regulations have been carefully crafted over decades to advance the health, safety, livability and equity in our communities. Moves that substantively dismantle that system need to be carefully considered, crafted and targeted to maximize efficacy and minimize harm. We do not believe that HB 3414 achieves this threshold.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Respectfully,

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