

Hello, my name is Jennifer Shuch, I am a planning consultant and a volunteer with Portland: Neighbors welcome, a grassroots, volunteer-led, pro-housing, and pro-tenant organization.

Oregon needs a new system for keeping jurisdictions accountable for enabling housing production on a broader scale. The draft recommendations for the Oregon Housing Needs Analysis appear to be an encouraging step in the right direction. I support the recommendations, which are clearly well thought through by the many stakeholders who worked on them.

However, in order to ensure that the state takes a proactive role in accountability, the Legislature must give state agencies clear, predictable direction on when to act to remove local barriers to market-rate and affordable housing. In addition, the Legislature should provide the state with clear guidelines for how to assess spatial equity to ensure that low-income families are not cut off from resources and services.

As part of my day job, I've worked on projects related to the Growth Management Act in Washington - one of the major challenges in these projects is the lack of specificity regarding some of the requirements. Without clear direction, everything becomes a guessing game, wasting time and resources that could be better spent elsewhere. It's in every Oregonian's interest to set clear, intentional recommendations and guidance that agencies can easily follow and apply.

There is not a town or city in the state of Oregon that remains untouched by the housing crisis. As climate change leads to more fires and more deadly heatwaves and freezes, we need to make sure that all state residents have safe homes in the communities where they feel most supported. OHNA is an ambitious step forward toward these goals. But if the Legislature fails to give agencies clear guidance on when to intervene, we will continue to see the same inequitable development patterns that have caused displacement and segregation statewide.

Thank you for your time.