



American Planning Association
Oregon Chapter

Creating Great Communities for All

VIA ELECTRONIC SUBMITTAL

March 1, 2023

Representative Maxine Dexter, Chair
Representative Mark Gamba, Vice-Chair
Representative Jeffrey Helfrich, Vice-Chair
House Committee on Housing and Homelessness
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Testimony from the Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association on HB 2984 -1 amendments

Dear Chair Dexter, Vice Chairs Gamba and Helfrich, and Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association appreciates this opportunity to provide comments on HB 2984, -1 amendments. OAPA is a nonprofit professional membership organization of over 800 planners and those who work with planning in formulating and implementing development and conservation policies at the state and local level. OAPA works to create sustainable and vibrant Oregon communities through professional development, advocacy for sound planning, providing resources to meet the challenges of growth and change, and embracing and promoting diversity, inclusion, and equity.

OAPA is neutral on HB 2984 -1 and offers the following comments for consideration. We understand the goal of this session and the Governor's Executive Orders support the production of more housing units in Oregon. OAPA supports this direction.

The issue we want to address for your consideration is the bill would have the effect of allowing housing to be developed on land that has been planned for employment - commercial services, retail, office, manufacturing. The number of housing units that might be gained by this proposal is unknown. What is known is that land planned and zoned for employment and commercial uses will be lost. There are other ways to deal with this loss, such as encouraging plans and zoning regulations to include mixed commercial and residential use, providing for housing as a conditional use in employment and commercial zones, and the like. There may be good examples of building housing in commercial areas where residents would have access to

groceries, services, and clinics within a walking distance of their home, but this planning work is and should continue to be done comprehensively and intentionally.

The concern here is not the supply of new housing, but the conversion into housing of existing buildings that are planned for jobs. Cities in Oregon are required to ensure that in addition to supplies of land for housing in their urban growth boundaries, they need to have supplies of buildable land for employment. OAPA wants to highlight this issue as one that might need to be addressed in the future if cities find that HB 2984 is successful in encouraging housing in commercial areas and leads to a deficit of land for commercial uses and jobs.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on HB 2984 -1.

Sincerely,

Kevin C. Cook

Kevin Cook (he/him)
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