



March 23, 2023

Senator Jama, Chair  
Senate Committee on Housing and Development  
State Capitol, Salem, OR

**Re: SB 1051 and amendments - Oppose**

Chair Jama, Vice Chair Anderson, and Members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 1051 and amendments. Central Oregon LandWatch ("LandWatch") is a conservation organization that, for more than 35 years, has been working to create well-planned cities and protect wild, open spaces across the region.

**This session, much excellent, bi-partisan work has focused on the policies and tools we need to solve Oregon's housing crisis most effectively. SB 1051 isn't one of these.**

SB 1051 would undermine the sensible planning tool of urban reserves by allowing premature UGB expansions. The bill is contrary to the urban reserve provisions in HB 2001, just passed by the House by a large, bipartisan margin. This bill would also pull cities' time and resources away from more effective, comprehensive housing solutions, and allow UGB expansions that are driven by individual private landowners, not a public process. It also incentivizes citing workforce housing on the edge of a city, far away from services and jobs and further exacerbating cities' serious issues related to a lack of resources for necessary infrastructure.

The whole point of identifying urban reserves is to make a city's next UGB expansion easier, because the hard work of identifying which lands the UGB will expand onto next has been done. UGB expansions should be based on need for more land, not the desires of a private landowner. If a city has a need for more land for housing, it should look inside its existing UGB first. If there's no land available there, it should expand its UGB, and if it has urban reserves, it will expand there first. So, this bill is a solution in search of a problem.

Oregon's communities need more housing for families with incomes below or at the area median. Instead of the urban sprawl that SB 1051 proposes, let's focus on tools proven to quickly produce more housing that's well-located near schools, stores, transit, parks and the services Oregonians need.

Sincerely,

Ben Gordon  
Executive Director

