

Submitter: Michael Kitkoski

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB1051

Oregon is a unique and special place. Governor Tom McCall ensured our state would achieve that uniqueness 50 years ago with the establishment of our land use laws. In our current time of divisiveness and vitriol, our Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) process remains a beacon of hope, giving all Oregonians a voice in our future via a thoughtful community-wide procedure. SB 1051 would undermine that process, allowing an individual landowner the power - and the financial incentive - to override the will of their community.

Besides, the provisions of the Oregon Housing Needs Analysis in House Bill 2001 provide a much easier path for all cities to designate urban reserves. That means those cities can use those reserves when a UGB expansion is needed.

Those of us who live in the Portland metro area know that we desperately need more housing as soon as possible. We also know that our metro cities already have areas where we can increase diverse and affordable housing options where people need and want to live: inside UGBs near work, school, shopping, and more. Right here in the Orenco area of Hillsboro, we have several affordable housing complexes which blend nicely into our neighborhood. And all of us are within walking distance of shopping, restaurants, schools and mass transit, including light rail.

I'm baffled by this sudden desire to jettison 50 years of successful land use history. From 2016 to 2021, for example, our cities approved 35 UGB expansions. Nearly all of them were completed at the city level in less than 12 months. In other words, the current thoughtful and comprehensive process works, so there is no need to bypass the law.

Thank you for your time.