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To: House Committee on Economic Development and Small Business

Chair Representative Janelle Bynum, Members of the Committee,

I am writing to the committee to express my support for House Bill 3317. I have been local in Wallowa County my whole life, and I am lucky enough to be able to live and raise my family here to this day.

We have been faced with a unique challenge in this community when it comes to workforce housing. The recent real estate boom in the area has added immense pressure to this community in regards to affordable housing and rentals. Businesses from the Health Care District, Agriculture, Municipalities, Service Industry, and more have been struggling to fill demands for jobs for the past couple of years with no end in sight.

I work as a professional in real estate, and inventory has been incredibly low, in effect driving the costs of homes to a high and unsustainable level. Families working full time in the area have experienced their hopes of owning homes or even finding rentals fade into the abyss, causing some to eventually leave the county. This has had ripple effects with industries that are looking to hire, and since most of them can't provide housing with the job, they are unable to fill positions, causing many of them to downsize or adjust to the capacity that they are stagnant in. This is not a healthy recipe for a community looking to grow and thrive in Eastern Oregon.

Housing I know is a complex issue throughout Oregon, and there is no one silver bullet to fix this problem, but steps like HB3317 can help communities like Wallowa County be proactive in finding solutions to this crisis. Thank you for your consideration and I hope your committee will support House Bill 3317. Thank you.

Joseph Dawson