

Submitter: Kelly Ritz

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB3414

Producing 36,000 units a year as set forth by the Governor is not an easy task. Our current planning and permitting system will not allow us to reach this level of production.

Currently, it takes between 3-5 years to develop a housing project in Oregon, sometimes longer. Local governments often impose significant land use, zoning, and design requirements that can add unreasonable cost and delay to needed projects.

Long timelines associated with producing housing is a huge problem. I have been developing residential subdivisions and building homes for over 25 years. In the early part of my career I was able to obtain land use approval, engineering approval (both necessary to start the development of the subdivision) and construct the subdivision in a little over one (1) year. Today that same project would take at least 3-5 years to develop and begin home construction. I currently have a residential project in Central Oregon that took over 11 months to get engineering approval and that was after 4 plus months to obtain Land Use Approval. This project was not appealed and had it been it would have probably taken another year or two to get through the land use process. This timing also does not take into account finding and putting the property under contract, working with a variety of subcontractors to make sure the project is viable as well as putting together a very complicated and detailed land use application. The time necessary to put together the land use application as well as having a pre-application meeting with the governing jurisdiction as well as producing various required reports and studies takes anywhere from 6 months to over a year.

Builders must submit highly technical applications, engage in multiple plan review meetings, and defend their project in public hearings and court. All of this increases the cost of housing for Oregonians at the end of the day.

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If we want to see a meaningful increase in production, we need to increase enforcement and oversight at the local level to create more housing, faster. We also need to grant relief from the certain planning requirements to allow more projects of different types and price points to be built. Oregon must move with urgency to break the status quo and remove bureaucratic roadblocks.

I support HB 3414 because it will help remove barriers to housing development, streamline planning and permitting, and, most importantly, hold local jurisdictions accountable for meeting the housing needs of their communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments today and strongly urge your support of HB 3414.