Submitter: Jane BLock

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Rules

Measure: HB3414

Put simply, House Bill 3414 represents one of the biggest rollbacks of urban environmental protections in Oregon that we have ever seen. It uses the current housing crisis as a Trojan Horse to exempt housing developers from a vast array of land use planning regulations put in place to protect the health and livability of our communities and our environment. HB 3414, as written, would require that municipalities give variances (exceptions) from a vast array of land use regulations to housing developers . Developers could request an unlimited number of variances and there is no requirement in the legislation that a developer demonstrate any benefit to the community as a result of these variances.

Our land use regulations exist to advance health, safety, equity, and livability in our communities and our environment. Nobody questions that we need thoughtful and effective strategies to address the current housing crisis, but HB 3414 represents neither.

Under HB 3414, a housing developer could bypass regulations designed to protect trees, wetlands, and floodplains. Developers could encroach on the Willamette River Greenway and environmental zones, and build in ways that completely disregard the impacts to their neighborhoods and neighbors. HB 3414 allows them to do this regardless of whether they are building affordable housing or giant mansions. We can, and must, do better. Proposed amendments may address some of these impacts, but even in a best case scenario, this bill will still result in a massive rollback of environmental protections that have been put in place over the past several decades.

I have lived in Oregon my entire life and am proud of our State's land use planning and environmental protections. I urge you to vote against this bill. It does not do anything to benefit the citizens of Oregon or our environment. It creates a huge hole for developers to waltz through and do irrepairable damages to our environment. Once gone, we can't get it back.