

Submitter: Kimberly Hall-Cochrun
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: HB3414

I am support affordable housing. I also support preserving livability and heritage. They can go hand in hand. Indeed, preservationists throughout the state have worked collaboratively with local governments on sensible regulations and procedures that allow new residential development in historic areas. But HB 3414 is not the way to continue this effective practice. HB 3414 would not only nullify all of the detailed efforts in removing barriers to housing within historic, natural, and scenic protected areas, it would continue a well-established trend of displacement and gentrification of culturally diverse areas that deserve continued protection. Many design standards and criteria are culturally responsive and protect diverse and underrepresented histories from erasure from market-rate development. Historic resources are unique assets for local communities and their long-term preservation requires adherence to longstanding protection rules. By-right adjustments undermine a clear and implementable land use system that already includes local variance and adjustment standards allowing for a relief valve when circumstances dictate. I oppose the variance component of HB 3414 and urge committee members to find ways to streamline and incent housing in a preservation- and climate-friendly manner while not sacrificing our existing resources – both built and natural.