

Submitter: Charlyn Ellis

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB1537

The City of Corvallis Legislative Committee acknowledges that SB 1537 is a fast moving bill with new amendments being proposed and discussed regularly. That be said, we would like to provide testimony on the high level framework at this time.

First, we are in support of funding to support infrastructure development, especially for affordable housing. Lack of funding for infrastructure is one of the biggest obstacles to development of affordable housing. We are also intrigued by the revolving loan fund and hope that, done well, it could also move the dial on affordable housing production.

However, we are opposed to the development of the Housing Accountability and Production office. The state of Oregon already has an appeals process for development concerns; we do not need a second pathway to appeal a local code decision. It would create confusion and time delays rather than help in housing production . We believe this section needs to be removed; there is no good way to fix it.

We are also very concerned about sections 37-47, the Housing Land Use Adjustments. We have spent considerable time and effort in making our code clear and objective in the past three years and this section would not support our efforts. We are concerned about the impact on historic districts, the piling up of ten variances, the lack of direction on how to count said variances, and the definition of "feasible". We are worried that, because the bill is moving so quickly, there might be sections that are at odds with each other and with the intent of the bill. Finally, we already have a process to make small adjustments and variances to plans at the local level.

Corvallis has permitted, supported through financing incentives, and built 465 units of affordable housing in the past three years, second only to Salem in the Willamette Valley. We are proud of our accomplishments in this area and look forward to working with the state legislature to craft legislation that will continue to support and fund this important work.