



Feb. 7, 2025

Oregon State Legislature
Housing Committee on Housing and Homelessness
Salem, Oregon

Re: HB 2400, HB 2422 and HB 2316: Opposed

Chair Marsh, Vice-Chair Andersen, Vice-Chair Breese-Iverson, and members of the House Committee on Housing and Homelessness,

Oregon Coast Alliance is an Oregon nonprofit corporation whose mission is protection of coastal natural resources and working with coastal residents and visitors to enhance community livability.

We write you today concerning three bills before your committee, all of which are similar and will have similar negative effects on Oregon's landscapes and land use laws. **ORCA opposes all three: HB 2400, HB 2422, HB 2316.**

HB 2400 would allow an additional house on every rural property, including forest-zoned and agriculture-zoned lands. But this bill is unnecessary; people who need an extra house on rural property can submit an application for it through several different existing mechanisms. All this bill would do is fragment the farm and forest lands essential for growing crops and timber. On the coast, this bill if passed would simply contribute to the growing numbers of second homes, large mansions and short-term rentals already fragmenting working lands and rural communities in all the coastal counties. This bill only requires the new house to be for a family member for the initial application – after that the owner may lease the house and (subsequently) sell it to any purchaser. The last thing the coast needs is a fast track to yet more short term rentals, which do absolutely nothing towards lessening the housing crisis.

HB 2422 would permit counties to allow case-by-case zoning across many rural lands – it is written to simply bypass the many safeguards embedded in the law now. It will encourage development where it is more costly and environmentally incompatible. On the coast this will certainly expand development in areas already fragile: the immediate coastal zone, where the highest-priced “ocean view lots” are along Highway 101, and the forested hills just behind the coastal zone. Counties would be allowed to double the dwelling density on rural lands limited to one house per 2.5 acres, without taking an Exception to Goal 14. Planning for rural development, UGB expansions and increased infrastructure is essential to managing our lands wisely. There is already limited farmland on the coast; please do not make farming more difficult than it already is by increasing development in rural residential areas. This bill will also increase infrastructure needs in rural areas, guaranteeing that they are more expensive and haphazard than they would be if planning processes are carried out equitably. Outside UGBs, land needs to be kept rural so that agriculture and forestry can thrive.

HB 2316 is a frightening bill that would among other things, break the agreement with Oregonians, who are the owners of the state’s public lands. All these lands are heavily used for recreation, hunting, hiking, bird-watching and many other purposes. This bill would allow homes on lands “owned” by the departments of Transportation, Fish and Wildlife and Forestry near Urban Growth Boundaries – with the state paying for all the infrastructure. This bill not only would give the state massive new fiscal responsibilities it can ill afford, it would also make a mockery of the Urban Growth Boundary process, and destroy many acres of sensitive natural resources ranging from wetlands to riparian zones.

All three of these bills would dramatically reduce the ability of the land use laws to be applied fairly across the board, to safeguard working farm and forest lands, and to plan for the future. None of them will solve the housing crisis so prevalent on the coast, as elsewhere in the state. They will only add to the short-term rental market, as well as provide incentives to landowners with money enough to build a large mansion in a rural area.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

/s/ Cameron La Follette

Cameron La Follette
Executive Director