

February 12, 2025

Senate Committee on Housing and Development
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: SB 58 – Oppose unless amended

Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Anderson, and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 58. Central Oregon LandWatch (“LandWatch”) is a land use and conservation advocacy organization that, for more than 35 years, has protected Central Oregon’s farm and forest lands, rivers and springs, fish and wildlife, and vibrant communities. We work to conserve the region’s ecosystems, wildlife habitat, and working rural lands balanced with a responsible, sustainable approach to planning and fostering thriving communities.

LandWatch opposes SB 58 unless amended to be limited to inside urban growth boundaries. This bill would direct OHCS to provide grants of no more than \$20,000 to homeowners for the purpose of remodeling homes to provide rentable “auxiliary dwelling units” inside existing homes. LandWatch supports this concept, as it would provide an additional strategy to help provide more rental housing desperately needed across the state. However, the bill is silent about where its auxiliary dwelling units will be allowed. Unless amended to specify that these auxiliary dwelling unit grants are allowed only inside UGBS, we must oppose this bill.

For one, auxiliary dwelling units are not allowed on rural lands designated for farming and forestry under statewide land use Goal 3 and Goal 4. Allowable uses on those lands are strictly defined by existing state statute. ORS 215.283. Second, it is premature to consider allowing auxiliary dwelling units on rural lands zoned for rural residential use. While the legislature recently allowed accessory dwellings units (ADUs) on some rural residential properties via SB 391 (2021), that allowance came after several years of stakeholder engagement and debate, leading to a list of limitations and conditions on rural ADUs. No similar list of limitations and conditions are specified in SB 58.

The bill should be amended to limit grants supporting auxiliary dwelling units to inside UGBs. Upon such an amendment, LandWatch would enthusiastically support SB 58.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

Regards,

Rory Isbell
Rural Lands Program Director & Staff Attorney
Central Oregon LandWatch

