

Submitter: Malcolm Costello

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3031

Dear Chair Marsh, Vice-Chairs Andersen and Breese-Iverson, and Committee Members,

I am writing to you in support of HB 3031.

Ask people why they move to Oregon and you frequently hear the same things – natural beauty, outdoor opportunities, and limited urban sprawl – all contributing to a wonderful sense of livability. And what has kept that in place as the population has grown is the remarkable Land Use legislation approved by voters in 1973, which is the responsibility of our legislators today to preserve for future generations.

As our population has grown, and the houseless population has reached crisis due to the lack of affordable housing, there is increased pressure to expand urban growth boundaries – to answer today’s problem with tomorrow’s sprawl. And yet a fundamental principle of that Land Use legislation is that it is the responsibility of local and state government to build adequate infrastructure within the Urban Growth Boundary to support housing development. I live in Bend where there is absolutely opportunity for infill higher density housing within the existing boundary, putting people closer to existing schools, parks, and stores, improving livability.

But adding housing increases pressure on existing city infrastructure – sewers, water, roads and sidewalks. It seems, at a time of significant housing shortage, it is incumbent upon the State to study such opportunities and challenges on a state-wide basis so government funding can be provided where it has the greatest potential to increase affordable housing stock within existing UGBs.

I hope you will quickly pass HB 3031 so this work can be done.