

Submitter: Ryan Starr

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,

Greetings from Bend, Oregon!

I am writing today to ask you to support HB 3031.

Nearly every city in Oregon – large and small – has land the community has already decided is good for housing, yet more homes have not been built there because extensions or upgrades of water and sewer lines, local roads, and sidewalks are expensive and there isn't sufficient funding.

As an architect practicing in Bend, Oregon, and the surrounding central Oregon area, I focus primarily on ADUs and other missing middle and infill housing types. These are only possible because of HB 2001. This bill, and the others that support it, are very forward thinking and vital to us being able to directly address the housing crisis we are in the middle of.

These bills specifically opened up a large number of underutilized lots within our current city limits to gentle increases to density by removing zoning restrictions that prohibited us from building anything other than single-family detached homes. The opportunities this offers us now have huge implications as it allows us to provide housing on a neighborhood level, increase housing options, improve walkability, and improve a number of metrics in general.

The problem facing us now is a matter of infrastructure. We have aging systems that are often not able to meet current code for the existing single-family detached homes, let alone the additional housing now allowed by HB 2001. These infill projects are now often faced with insurmountable infrastructure costs that kill these infill housing projects. A project adding 4 homes can't sustain \$200,000 in additional infrastructure costs to bring local water and sewer mainlines up to current code.

But these types of projects are vital. If we can remove this roadblock, then we open up hundreds of lots that are ready to be developed to add a great number of much needed homes without expanding the UGB or adding any additional infrastructure - just fix and upgrade what we have.

Another thing that makes these small infill projects so amazing is that they have a

faster turnaround when compared to larger housing solutions (1-2 years from start of design to finished construction vs. 5-6 years for large apartment projects). They are also more likely to keep money local, and they are generally less controversial.

Decades ago, this infrastructure was commonly funded by federal, state, and local funding sources, but those have significantly dwindled. This long-term underinvestment has negatively impacted building the housing Oregonians need.

Housing advocates, builders, cities, and organizations that I support all agree that investing in these lands is one of the most important steps the state can take now to unlock parcels within our cities to quickly produce the housing we need, where we need it to be, including places located closer to schools, parks, and stores.

With many priorities before us, I hope you will quickly pass HB 3031.

Thank you for your consideration! I appreciated this opportunity to weigh in.

Sincerely,

Ryan Starr