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February 26, 2025

Sen. Lew Frederick and Rep. Emerson Levy, Co-Chairs  
Joint Committee on Ways & Means  
Subcommittee on Natural Resources  
State Capitol  
Salem OR 97310

Re: SB 5529 - Land Use Board of Appeals

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 5529, the budget request for the Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA), including in particular Policy Option Package 500.

1000 Friends of Oregon is a nonprofit, membership organization that works with Oregonians to support livable urban and rural communities; protect family farms, forests and natural areas; and provide transportation and housing choice.

Oregon's land use planning program embraces public involvement. Local governments make thousands of land use decisions every year, and the vast majority of those decisions are not appealed. However, if the public or an applicant believes a local decision violates state or local law, the Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) provides a quick, consistent, and efficient appeal process and issues thorough decisions based on the law.

LUBA was created in 1979, to replace a system that was neither quick nor consistent – when appeals of local land use decisions went to the county circuit courts. LUBA consists of three Board members, who are required to be attorneys and members of the Oregon Bar. As LUBA describes, its mission is to “provide a simplified appeal process, a speedy resolution of land use disputes and a consistent and correct interpretation of state and local land use laws.”

The Land Use Board of Appeals continues to fulfill this mission, and on a modest budget. Most opinions are issued within the statutory time frames, few are appealed to the Court of Appeals, and of those that are, LUBA is usually affirmed.

We strongly support POP 500, which would enable LUBA to modernize its database and implement a long overdue electronic filing and case management system.

*We have worked with Oregonians to enhance our quality of life by building livable urban and rural communities, protecting family farms and forests, and conserving natural areas since 1974.*