

February 26, 2025

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

RE: Senate Bill 438 and Senate Bill 878 - Oppose

Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Anderson, and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill 438 and Senate Bill 878, which as introduced would allow additional dwellings outside of the urban growth boundary.

Multnomah County's 2025 State Legislative Agenda emphasizes the importance of continuing local control of land use and zoning. Senate Bill 438 and Senate Bill 878 take away land use decision-making authority and add additional burdens for land use planners by assigning to them the difficult task of verifying familial relationships. Multnomah County has adopted a comprehensive plan consistent with Oregon's land use planning goals that supports maintaining the rural character of areas outside of the Portland metropolitan area's urban growth boundary, as well as mitigating impacts to natural resources and wildlife in rural areas.

Further, Multnomah County is not prepared to accommodate rural sprawl on our rural road system. Oregon's land use system, through urban growth boundaries, aims to concentrate population. This strategy, driven by Goal 14, effectively combats urban and rural sprawl, reduces public service costs, mitigates wildfire risk, protects natural resources, and lessens carbon emissions.

In short, SB 438 & SB 878 add more unfunded responsibilities and take away local planning authority. We respectfully request your opposition to SB 438 & SB 878.

Sincerely,

Tom Powers
Government Relations

Submitted by Tom Powers, Multnomah County Government Relations
tom.powers@multco.us (503) 348-2021