

Submitter: Luke Norman

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2138

Dear Chair Marsh and Members of the House Committee on Housing and Homelessness,

My name is Luke Norman and I live in NW Portland. I join a coalition of housing supporters, including Portland: Neighbors Welcome endorsing House Bill 2138. This bill can help cut red tape and legalize more housing that is desperately needed by working families to be able to afford to live in their own communities.

However, today I want to focus my testimony on why the committee should retain the language in SECTION 22. (1), which repeals the requirement for demolition review for houses which are listed as "contributing" in National Register Historic Districts.

The creation of National Register districts are are inherently undemocratic:

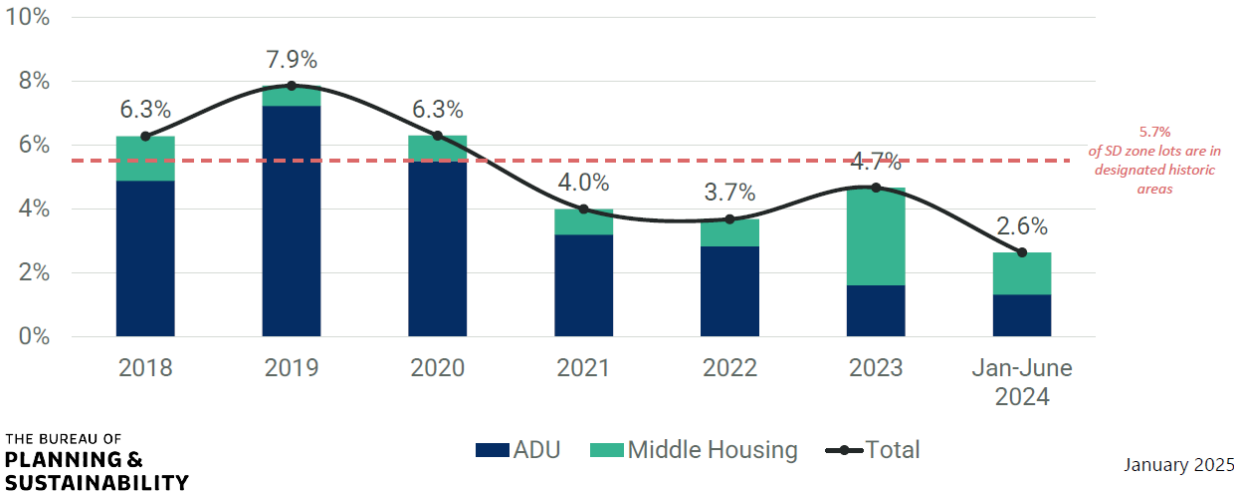
- Only property owners have a say in their creation
- All other residents, including renters, are excluded
- Local city councils are shut out

Why pursue National Register districts? So some neighborhoods can unfairly exempt themselves from city and state housing legislation. Listen to what they've said in the past:

- If the Laurelhurst Historic District doesn't happen, then RIP [Residential Infill Project] will allow every Laurelhurst house to be torn down and replaced by a duplex, triplex, or quadplex - Historic Laurelhurst
- As in Ladd's Addition & Irvington, demolitions will all but cease... This is a crucial protection, especially in light of Portland's Residential Infill Project - Eastmoreland Neighborhood Association

And the City of Portland reports that these undemocratic and unfair National Registers have been successful in thwarting city and state legislative goals, as these districts see less middle housing being built than the rest of the city.

Share of ADUs and Middle Housing Permitted in Designated Historic Areas



The common sense change in SECTION 22. (1), continues to allow cities to celebrate and preserve their history through local historic districts that have democratic oversight from the city council that is elected by all voters. This allows city council to balance the goals of historic preservation, along equally important goals of addressing the housing crisis and ensuring that their cities are home to Oregonians of all ages, wages, and stages of life.

Thank you,

Luke Norman