



March 19, 2025

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

Re: Support for SB 6

Chair Pham, Vice Chair Anderson, Members of the Committee:

Oregon Smart Growth (OSG) is a coalition of responsible developers, investors and allied professionals committed to the feasible development of walkable, livable communities that are environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable for Oregon's future.

We are writing to you today in support of SB 6, which expedites the permitting process for multifamily development, and to encourage the Legislature to continue to prioritize our housing supply and affordability crisis by taking bold actions to encourage housing production.

Boosting housing production across the state is critical to addressing our housing affordability crisis, reducing homelessness, and enhancing our state and regional economic prosperity.

To effectively confront our current underproduction crisis, we need to build all types of housing, including market rate housing, across not only Oregon but throughout the United States, and we need to build much more housing in urban areas to fill the huge gap in production. In Oregon, this means addressing both the affordable and market rate housing shortage in the Portland metro area, since roughly half of the state's population lives there.

OSG has long advocated for more efficient permitting timelines — particularly in the City of Portland — and we have participated in Portland's Permitting Task Force. Yet permitting timelines in Oregon's largest city average more than 200 days, and it's not uncommon for our members to report permitting taking well over a year for multifamily projects.

SB 6 is a critical step toward breaking through the bottlenecks that are holding back desperately needed housing production across Oregon.

The urgency could not be clearer. This week, Willamette Week reported that apartment construction in the Portland metro area has fallen to its lowest level in more than a decade. According to data from CoStar, there were only 4,375 apartments under construction in the final quarter of 2024—less than half the 10-year quarterly average of over 10,000 units.

At a time when our population is growing and our housing shortage deepens, we simply cannot afford to let unnecessary permitting delays make the problem worse. Long, unpredictable timelines add significant costs to multifamily housing development. Every day a project sits in

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review, developers face rising interest rates, labor costs, and material expenses, driving up home prices for Oregon families.

SB 6 offers a commonsense solution by creating predictability and efficiency in the permitting process. Clear deadlines give housing providers the ability to plan and budget with confidence, reduce financing risk, and move projects forward more quickly. Ultimately, that means more homes on the market sooner—and at lower costs. Streamlining permit approvals will also support Oregon's construction workforce and contribute to the state's economic vitality.

We recognize that permitting agencies may need additional resources to meet this 45-day requirement, and we are ready to work together to ensure they have what they need. But we cannot allow bureaucratic delays to continue to stand in the way of meeting the Governor's ambitious housing production goals.

Oregon is at a crossroads. We can continue to tolerate the status quo of delay and inaction, or we can adopt real reforms that will help us build the homes our communities so desperately need. SB 6 is a reasonable, targeted approach to accelerate housing production, lower development costs, and improve affordability for Oregonians.

On behalf of Oregon Smart Growth and our members across the state, we respectfully urge your support for this important legislation. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Amy Ruiz
Advocacy Director