



HB 2258 -2

Testimony of Margaret Van Vliet

April 2, 2025

Chair Marsh, Vice Chairs Breese-Iverson and Anderson, members of the committee. My name is Margaret Van Vliet and I reside in Portland. I am pleased to support the –2 amendment to HB 2258, because it addresses very specific and localized barriers to small-scale, infill housing development.

I've enjoyed a 35-year career in the affordable housing industry, starting in banking and real estate finance, and including almost five years as director of Oregon Housing and Community Services. I currently run a consultancy advising governments, non-profits, and foundations on the west coast about housing and homelessness, strategies for wildfire recovery, and more.

I've learned that the pace and scale of housing production is dependent on many, many factors – only a few of which are within the control of state and local governments. Thanks to Governor Kotek and the Legislature, we've done a lot in the last few years with funding and regulatory changes designed to speed development.

And I think it's fair to say, with respect, that it's not enough.

HB 2258's –2 amendment is a small but important step in the right direction. I say that because – regrettably – local government processes too often impede progress. The –2 – while having some prescriptive elements – to my eye strikes the right balance between protecting the state's interest in accelerating housing production, and the principals of local control. Great care has been taken to define the circumstances under which land use decisions are to be issued, and the types of infill housing that are to be permitted. I'm particularly excited about the concept of permit-ready plans, as the availability of such plans will remove barriers to entry for small, local builders. And we need more builders in this game.

After many years working on housing, I believe strongly that our complex housing delivery systems, that rely on actions by both public and private actors, simply must evolve. The status quo is no longer serving us. This was brought home to me when I visited Los Angeles last month as part of a wildfire recovery delegation. It reminded me of Oregon's experience in 2020, when wildfires completely upended lives, neighborhoods, and whole communities. In one terrible weekend, we lost 4,200 homes – a number that eclipses the amount of production OHCS can finance with all its many

and varied resources in an entire year. And we are far from recovered from those wildfires. Mother Nature is increasingly disrupting our status quo, too often in devastating and traumatic ways that set us back ever farther in our housing imbalance.

So I applaud the work of this committee, and urge your continued challenging of the status quo. HB 2258 with the -2 represents a small but vital disruption that can move our state forward.

Respectfully submitted,
Margaret Van Vliet, Principal
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Margaret Van Vliet formed [Trillium Advisors](#) in 2019, a consultancy focusing on strategy development, organizational improvement, project management, and cross-sector facilitation. Her specialties are housing and homelessness, as well as wildfire recovery. Trillium clients include the office of Oregon Governor Kate Brown, Oregon Housing and Community Services, the Port of Portland, and a variety of local governments, non-profits, and foundations on the west coast.

Van Vliet is a long-time public sector affordable housing leader who began her career in banking and commercial real estate finance. In Sonoma County, California, Van Vliet oversaw the housing authority and redevelopment agency during and after the 2017 North Bay wildfires that destroyed 5300 homes. She also led the team that created the housing recovery and renewal plan adopted by the County in the wake of the disaster. Previously, Van Vliet served under two governors as director of the Oregon Housing and Community Services Department, led the City of Portland's Housing Bureau, and served as Chief Operating Officer for the Housing Authority of Portland (now Home Forward).

Trillium Advisors is an Oregon-certified women-owned business. The firm is also named as a qualified professional services provider by the Association of Bay Area Governments/Metropolitan Transportation Commission, the Portland area's Metro Regional Government, and the Multnomah County Joint Office of Homeless Services.

Van Vliet was named to Oregon Governor Tina Kotek's [Housing Production Advisory Council](#) in 2023. Other volunteer activities include serving as an advisors to [After The Fire USA](#), a Special Advisor to [The Oregon iSector](#), as well as immediate past chair of Portland-based non-profit Relay Resources.