

Submitter: Jimmy Dorsey
On Behalf Of: Historic Stephens House
Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3190

RE: SUPPORT HB 3190

Dear Chair Nathanson, Vice Chairs Reschke and Walters, and Committee Members,
We are writing to express our strong support for HB 3190, which would reauthorize Oregon's Special Assessment for Historic Properties program.

As the current stewards of the James B. Stephens House, officially the oldest house in Portland, we have experienced firsthand the immense responsibility and financial commitment required to properly maintain and restore a property of such historical significance. Built in the 19th century and written about as a landmark as early as 1898, our home was designated a Portland City Landmark in 1979 and added to the historic registry in 1997.

The preservation of historic properties like ours represents a substantial investment—we have personally dedicated hundreds of thousands of dollars toward restoration efforts to ensure this important piece of Oregon's heritage remains intact for future generations. These properties are not just our homes; they are living museums that tell the story of our state's development and culture.

We have worked diligently to share this historic treasure with others by opening two units as short-term rentals, allowing visitors to experience an authentic piece of Portland's history. Our efforts have been recognized with 5-star reviews, "guest favorite" status, and "superhost" designations. The feedback consistently highlights how much guests appreciate experiencing such a significant historical property that has been lovingly restored.

However, the financial burden of proper historic preservation falls heavily on individual property owners like ourselves. As an elementary school teacher and realtor with three children, we represent ordinary Oregonians who happen to be caring for an extraordinary piece of our state's history. The reauthorization of the Special Assessment program through HB 3190 would provide critical support to property owners who are preserving Oregon's heritage at considerable personal expense.

Just as this bill would help revitalize commercial corridors and "main streets" across Oregon, it would also recognize the contributions of residential property owners who maintain historically significant homes. These properties enhance our communities, attract tourism, and maintain the unique character that makes Oregon special.

We urge you to support HB 3190 and reinstate this valuable program that acknowledges the public benefit provided by properly maintained historic properties. This legislation represents not just financial assistance, but recognition of the important role historic preservation plays in maintaining Oregon's unique identity and cultural heritage.

Respectfully submitted,

Joy and Jimmy Dorsey
Owners, James B. Stephens House
Portland, Oregon????????????????