Submitter: Harley Cowan

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3190

Dear Chair Nathanson, Vice Chairs Reschke and Walters, and Committee Members,?
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?I enthusiastically support HB 3190 which reauthorizes a version of Oregon's longtime? Special Assessment for Historic Properties program. An earlier version of this program expired? last June and this bill will re-enact this financial tool/incentive specifically for commercial?? property owners.?
?This bill would bring back a program that helps invest in our state's historic properties and?? ensure they are renovated and maintained responsibly. It would offer commercial properties a?? specially assessed value (calculated by the county assessor) for a ten-year benefit term in?? exchange for making appropriate improvements to the historic property. It would be?
? administered by the Oregon Historic Preservation Office, a division of Oregon Parks and?? Recreation, who can readily administer this new version as they are still managing the former?? program's enrolled properties.?
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Just when our "main streets," commercial corridors, and downtowns across the state need an?? infusion of support and financial investment, HB 3190 can play an important role in helping? invest and revitalize these properties. And, it also aligns with and helps leverage existing?? programs like the Main Street Revitalization grant fund. And, it would provide a long-term?? incentive as the benefit period is over ten years, which is an essential stabilizing benefit for our?? downtowns.?
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Additionally, HB 3190 could help spur increased housing production, specifically in the?? underutilized and vacant upper floors of commercial buildings. This can help many struggling,?? vacant, or underutilized properties in every community in our state.?? Astoria's Merwyn Hotel created 40 units of affordable and work force housing. Salem's Fork? Forty project created a food hub?? and?? reestablished new housing units on the second floor.?