

Testimony for SB 1566

Chair Taylor, Vice-Chair Hayden, Members of the Committee:

Thank you for your work on this committee and your attention to this Bill. My name is Troy Cribbins, I currently serve on the City Council in Coos Bay and am a candidate for State Representative for House District 9. I am testifying today in support of Senate Bill 1566, which exempts certain public projects, primarily those related to affordable housing, from Oregon's prevailing wage requirements.

Oregon faces a severe housing crisis, and coastal areas like Coos Bay exceedingly feel this pressure. Working families, young adults just starting out, and essential workers struggle to find affordable places to live. Many promising housing projects stall or scale back because costs become prohibitive, especially when public funding or partnerships trigger prevailing wage rules.

SB 1566 offers a targeted, common-sense exemption for affordable housing projects. By removing this extra cost layer, developers and public agencies can stretch limited dollars further, building more units restricted to lower-income households. This reform keeps projects viable without eliminating worker protections entirely- market wages will still apply, and contractors will compete fairly.

In Coos Bay and surrounding communities, we desperately need more workforce and low-income housing to support local jobs, retain families, and stabilize neighborhoods. We are in a deficit for low, medium, and high price range housing units, and are forecasted to need an additional 543 rental and single-unit dwellings by 2040. This lack of housing availability is a deterrent to recruiting workers and employers. It also puts pressure on available rental units with over 25% of our community renters spending over 50% of their income on rent. Prevailing wage mandates, while well-intentioned in some context, drives up costs unnecessarily for these critical projects and slow progress on addressing homelessness and housing shortages.

SB 1566 provides practical relief that will directly result in more homes for Oregonians who need them most. I urge the committee to advance SB 1566.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Troy A. Cribbins

