

Chairman Pham, Vice Chair Anderson and Members of the Committee

My name is Robb Corbett and I am the City Manager for the City of Pendleton

I am pleased to express the City of Pendleton's strong support for Senate Bill 1578, which offers targeted solutions to Oregon's rural housing crisis. As a community in Umatilla County—with a population density well below 30 people per square mile—Pendleton is acutely aware of our desperate need for more affordable housing options. This legislation would empower us to rezone limited acres for denser residential development and expand accessory dwelling units on existing farmland, providing flexible pathways to increase our housing inventory without compromising our agricultural heritage.

This is an economic development bill. We have 100's of vacant jobs in our community. A recent study conducted found that a lack of housing was the primary reason these jobs remain unfilled. Oregon land use laws have long challenged our ability to build inside the City limits as we struggle to find developers to build on the few remaining buildable acres left in our UGB, that also happens to be the least desirable.

Pendleton is a City surrounded by rolling hills used for dry land farming and grazing. By enabling modest, high-density projects and innovative ADU expansions, SB 1578 will help attract and retain families, workers, and seniors in our region, bolstering economic vitality and addressing long-standing shortages.

We urge the legislature to pass this bill swiftly to support communities like ours.

Thank you.