

Submitter: Saurav Palla
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2138

Good afternoon members of the House, staff, and fellow Oregonians. My name is Saurav Palla and I'm a resident of the Goose Hollow neighborhood in Portland, here to testify in support of House Bill 2138.

As a young person who was born and raised in the state, I've watched in frustration, alongside members of my generation, as housing costs have gone from bad to worse across Oregon. Although the reasons for this crisis are myriad, most are man-made and not out of your power to take action on. We've seen how a litany of local and state regulations have resulted in an environment that has failed to produce the kinds of housing that Oregonians desperately want and need, in any meaningful quantities. This bill takes aim at several of these roadblocks and will allow individual property owners, developers, and local communities to create the "missing middle" housing types we need. These are the kinds of the homes that put residents closer to the places they need to be, improve housing affordability for young Oregonians, and enable seniors to downsize and age in place without leaving the neighborhoods they know and love.

I also want to urge the committee to retain the language in SECTION 22. (1) (f), which repeals the requirement for demolition review for houses which are listed as "contributing" in National Register Historic Districts. Undemocratic and landowner-controlled National Register districts are distinct from local historic districts, which have democratic oversight from the city council, who are legally allowed to consider other factors than historic preservation, and can also consider the interests of tenants, like most people of my age group are, in addition to landowners.

This bill retains Oregon cities' ability to preserve historical resources and does not impact local historic districts, but grants cities the flexibility they need to address our ongoing housing crisis and ensure that we can build housing for Oregonians of all ages, wages, and stages of life.

Thank you for your time.