

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

Dear Chair Marsh and Members of the House Committee on Housing and Homelessness,

I strongly support HB2138, and offer a couple minor adjustment suggestions to make it even better:

- (1) Allow 1 or 2 dwellings on each MHLD lot (as opposed to current language, which only allows 1 per lot). This provides the flexibility to do a MHLD cottage cluster where the existing building is a duplex or house+ADU. It's unlikely the allowance for 2 units would get used in other situations. But if it did, that'd be fine too.
- (2) Direct DLCD to add an administrative rule specific to Cottage Clusters that allows jurisdictions to apply landscape coverage standards no more restrictive than what is allowed in their lowest density multi-dwelling zone. This removes an existing loophole that allows jurisdictions to thwart cottage cluster development by applying sky high landscape coverage standards. We don't know of any jurisdiction that's done this - yet - but they'd be a lot more tempted once they have to allow attached cottages, which can't be constrained by FAR or site coverage area. If landscape coverage standards are allowed - and capped - we think it would still be fine to make cottages unconstrained by FAR or site coverage.
- (3) Limit attached cottages to groups of 2 to 4 (you pick), rather than unlimited. This helps avoid having attached cottages be just another name for traditional multifamily housing (think of a 2-story building with 8 ground floor units and 8 2nd floor units overhead) on larger single-dwelling lots. We can definitely use more of that type of housing. But cities shouldn't have to allow multifamily development everywhere a SF home is allowed; they should be able to steer it to higher opportunity areas and those with better transit access.

Best,
- Eli

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