



March 19, 2025
Senator Khanh Pham, Chair
Senate Committee on Housing and Development
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE, Salem, OR 97301

RE: Salem Chamber Written Testimony in Support of SB 974

Dear Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Anderson, and Members of the Senate Committee on Housing and Development,

Our organization represents over one thousand (1,000+) local businesses and forty-five thousand (45,000) employees in the Salem area. The breadth and diversity of industries represented by our membership demonstrate an intersection of the small businesses that collectively create our state economy. The Salem Chamber supports a healthy business climate and strong local communities for economic growth.

We support SB 974 and the -1 amendments that will streamline housing approvals, remove bureaucratic barriers to building, and lower costs. According to ECONorthwest, Salem's median home price is \$429,000. To reduce the cost of home prices and assist with home ownership, we need to create more supply.

SB 974-1 will speed up housing production by simplifying land use decisions for residential projects within residential zones, thus reducing delays and providing housing supply more quickly. Requiring a 120-day timeline for approvals, sets clear timelines for permits and engineering reviews. Additionally, the elimination of aesthetic design reviews removes unnecessary obstacles to development.

By capping legal and engineering fees, unmerited appeals that delay projects will be discouraged while protecting home builders from unnecessary financial burdens.

Supporting faster housing production within our Urban Growth Boundaries will invigorate our local economies and make home ownership and wealth creation a reality for many Oregonians. Please support SB 974-1 to build jobs, homes, and community.

Respectfully,

Tom Hoffert, CEO Salem Area Chamber of Commerce

**Salem Area Chamber
of Commerce**

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Salem Area Chamber of Commerce