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April 16, 2025

Rep. Ben Bowman, Chair
Committee Members
House Committee on Rules
State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 3499 - urban renewal

Dear Chair Bowman and Committee Members:

1000 Friends of Oregon appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in **opposition** to HB 3499. 1000 Friends of Oregon is a nonprofit, membership organization that works with Oregonians to support livable urban and rural communities; protect family farms, forests and natural areas; and provide transportation and housing choice. 1000 Friends of Oregon has long been involved in advocating for the full implementation of Goal 10, the statewide land use planning goal that sets the Housing objectives for our towns and cities to reach in their land use planning.¹

HB 3499 would require the approval or amendment of an urban renewal plan by the electors of the municipality proposing the urban renewal plan. This would hamper the ability of local governments to use an effective tool to build more housing, in addition to promoting economic development.

Urban renewal, or tax increment financing (TIF), is a flexible revenue option to focus investments, revitalize specific areas, build-out or repair needed infrastructure, and more. It is also a tool that local governments can use to obtain funding from other sources, such as state or federal funds, that the local government can use to amplify local investments.

Adopting an urban renewal area (URA) already requires a public process and the consent of the largest taxing districts in the affected area. Those local governments that would like to have a public vote on URAs can already do so through local ordinances or charters. A state requirement for a vote is not necessary, and would establish a significant barrier for local governments needing to make investments to support housing development.

¹ The primary goal statement of Goal 10 is:

"To provide for the housing needs of citizens of the state. Buildable lands for residential use shall be inventoried and plans shall encourage the availability of adequate numbers of needed housing units at price ranges and rent levels which are commensurate with the financial capabilities of Oregon households and allow for flexibility of housing location, type and density."

We urge you to not move forward with HB 3499. Thank you for considering our comments.

Mary Kyle McCurdy

Associate Director