

Submitter: Brenda Smola-Foti
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB78

Dear Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed bill that would impose arbitrary size limitations on homes rebuilt after destruction by fire, flooding, or decay. This bill does not address any existing issues in the replacement dwelling process. Instead, it places unnecessary restrictions on property owners—particularly those on farm and forest land—limiting their ability to rebuild homes larger than 10% of their original size or exceeding 2,500 square feet.

At a time when Oregon faces pressing challenges—including wildfire recovery, rural economic stability, and housing shortages—it is deeply concerning that energy is being spent on restricting homeowners' ability to rebuild. Many of these homes were lost due to natural disasters, and the rebuilding process is already difficult enough without arbitrary limitations that disregard individual needs, family sizes, and the realities of rural living.

This bill does nothing to support responsible land use or disaster recovery. Instead, it adds undue burdens on families, farmers, and rural communities trying to rebuild their lives. It also ignores the fact that many existing farm and forest dwellings were built to accommodate multi-generational households or farm operations—an essential part of rural Oregon's culture and economy.

If the goal is to promote responsible land use, efforts should focus on streamlining the permitting process, ensuring fire-resistant building standards, and improving infrastructure—not penalizing those who have already suffered significant loss. Imposing one-size-fits-all restrictions does not serve Oregonians and will only create more hardship for those trying to rebuild.

I urge you to oppose this bill and instead support policies that help, rather than hinder, those recovering from disaster. Please prioritize solutions that address real issues rather than creating unnecessary red tape for rural property owners.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Brenda Smola-Foti
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Carlton, OR