

Submitter: Elisabeth Gross
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2316
Chair Marsh, Vice-Chairs Andersen and Breese-Iverson, and Committee Members:

Please oppose HB 2316-1, which would allow housing development on state-owned lands outside urban growth boundaries (UGBs) by designating them as "Home Start Lands."

I can appreciate concern for seeking solutions to Oregon's housing shortage. But this bill, as written, is counter to Oregon's land use planning system and creates concerns about responsible land use and infrastructure costs. But, promoting development outside of cities will:

*Create isolate pockets of low- and moderate-income residents disconnected from jobs, schools, and essential services. It places vulnerable communities in isolated areas with limited access to transportation and economic opportunity. Affordable housing is just one component of the end goal of affordable living and complete communities.

*Require extending infrastructure such as water, sewer, and emergency services to these remote locations which will be expensive and inefficient. At a time when cities and towns are struggling to provide essential services within existing UGBs, diverting resources to develop state-owned lands outside urban areas is fiscally irresponsible.

*Increase greenhouse gas emissions, the risk of wildfire, and will strain rural infrastructure.

HB 2316-1 overrides critical state and local land use laws which protect our natural environment. It gives the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) discretion to designate lands as "Home Start Lands," even if they serve important conservation or public purposes.

Please oppose this -1 proposal as it does not provide a sustainable or equitable solution to Oregon's housing challenges. I respectfully urge the Committee to reject this bill as written and consider ways to focus tools like this within UGBs to promote affordable housing within well-planned, connected communities.

Thanks,
Elisabeth