



Dear Legislators,

On behalf of the Oregon Land and Water Alliance, I am writing to urge you to vote NO on HB 4035.

Oregon's land use framework, established under ORS Chapter 197 and implemented by the Land Conservation and Development Commission, is built upon mandatory compliance with statewide planning goals. These provisions require that Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) expansions be justified by demonstrated need, preceded by an evaluation of alternatives within the boundary, and coordinated with the orderly and economic provision of infrastructure.

HB 4035 expands and further streamlines the "one-time" UGB exception process, increasing acreage allowances and lowering procedural rigor. In doing so, it weakens the evidentiary and comparative analysis traditionally required under ORS 197.296 and ORS 197.298. Repeated reliance on expedited exceptions risks normalizing a process that circumvents the deliberative safeguards embedded in Oregon's carefully thought-out planning system.

This bill also raises three substantive concerns:

1. Agricultural land losses.
UGB expansion permanently removes land from resource designation. Even when lower-value soils are prioritized under ORS 197.298, in reality, cumulative incremental expansions erode Oregon's agricultural base and conflict with Goal 3's preservation mandate.
2. Infrastructure and fiscal impacts.
Peripheral growth requires costly extension of water, roads, sewers, schools, and emergency services. Without strict cost-internalization standards, these liabilities are shifted to existing residents through rate increases and/or long-term bonded debt, contrary to the "orderly and economic" service requirements of Goals 11 and 14.

3. Questionable Affordability Impacts.

Housing affordability is driven primarily by financing costs, construction inputs, regulatory delay, and zoning capacity within existing UGBs. There is no empirical evidence that fringe land expansion alone reduces prices. Absent enforceable affordability conditions tied to new acreage, expansion will simply produce conventional market-rate development while increasing sprawl.

Oregon's land use system is nationally recognized precisely because it resists short-term expediency in favor of long-term planning discipline. Housing supply challenges should be addressed first through infill, redevelopment, infrastructure finance reform, while maximizing capacity within existing boundaries.

For all of these reasons, I respectfully urge all legislators to oppose. HB 4035.

Thank you for your consideration,

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