



Bend, Culver, La Pine, Madras, Maupin
Metolius, Prineville, Redmond, Sisters

February 13, 2023

To Whom it May Concern:

Re: HB 2705

On behalf of the Central Oregon Cities Organization (COCO), we encourage support for HB 2705. Property tax abatements have been a needed and frequently used tool for cities and counties to incent the development of specific housing needs.

For all of Central Oregon, access to affordable and workforce housing is among the most critical issues facing our cities. It is reflected in metrics such as the high number of severely rent burdened families, incomes that are not keeping pace with housing prices, rising housing costs, and the overall lack of opportunities for home ownership for those making median incomes. These challenges exacerbate as population growth continues.

Over the last few years, housing prices have increased more than 75%. Over that same time span, wages have only grown by an average of 2 to 3 percent per year.

Currently there are very limited options in Oregon to incentivize middle income housing and there are no other federal or state funding sources or incentives for this housing product. Increasing the production of affordable and middle-income housing will require the integrated action of diverse partners and deployment of tools and programs which incentivize the market.

Central Oregon and its communities need to have as many tools as possible to encourage and leverage much needed workforce housing. We urge passage of HB 2705.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Preedin".

Michael Preedin
COCO Chair
Mayor
Sisters, Oregon

Chair Michael Preedin
Central Oregon Cities Organization
Email: moreedin@sisters.or.us

Doug Riggs, Lobbyist
NW Policy
(503) 702-5120 doug@nwpolicy.com