

Submitter: P Russell Gladhart

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing

Measure: HB4118

I offer testimony in opposition to both HB 4118 and proposed -1 amendment. HB 4119 would create many problems and unforeseen consequences without addressing the very real need for affordable housing. Successful land use planning requires balancing many factors to determine how to meet the many, often competing needs of different groups of residents and industries. This is best done through a public process that gives predictability to land owners and residents. HB 4118 would encourage individual landowners to bypass that process, and would provide no guarantees that the resulting development would increase affordability for low or middle income "workforce" members. In addition, it would create many challenges and headaches for cities and towns trying to fit these new developments within their existing plans. Increasing the supply of affordable housing is best addressed by policies and regulations that directly address that need within our existing cities and towns, not by simply expanding the boundary and hoping for that result.

The -1 amendment would create even more problems, creating a new task-force to address a wide range of diverse issues. The mandate is much too broad to provide realistic solutions to these many problems, and the task-force lacks the expertise to address the range of problems under consideration. The conclusions of the task force are likely to benefit a small minority of land owners and developers, rather than the majority of Oregon's residents.

In addition, as a farmer in Yamhill County, I would like to remind you that Oregon's farmland has tremendous value in its current state. Farms drive long term economic growth and employment, as well as providing many environmental benefits for the residents of Oregon's cities and towns. Please, help us find solutions for affordable housing without just paving over our agricultural lands.

Thank you for your consideration.