

Submitter: Russell Johnson
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4035

Dear Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson, and Members of the Committee,

My wife and I are Newberg residents and urge you to support HB 4035, as written, without modification.

Oregon faces a Housing Affordability Crisis which necessitates bold action. The attempts to "water-down" HB 4035 by 1,000 Friends of Oregon will undermine its ability to achieve the desired results. It is important to vote for HB 4035 as written for the following reasons:

SB 1537 is a wonderful bill, but it has failed to bring sufficient land to the market. A 100 acre cap will preclude the use of land which is more economically feasible to build on. A 100 acre cap will handicap the ability of cities to plan complete communities with parks, schools and a variety of housing choices. Forcing expansion onto land that is already partially parceled will not result in sufficient shovel-ready land for houses. In many cases the owners have not/will not allow their properties to be further parcelized.

The "Resource Land" adjacent to UGB's often is not/will not be farmed because the soil is inappropriate for farming. It is frequently too rocky, steep or constrained. Oregon's unique classification (rarely found elsewhere!) of Type 4 soil as high value farmland) causes results in land not being put to its "highest and best use."

While land preservation is extremely important, it should not come at the expenses of human dignity and home ownership. It is time to prioritize the Oregon Dream for young families who are currently being priced out of the market.

We urge you to vote for HB 4035 as written to help address the State's housing affordability crisis. A "watered-down" version will not work.

Sincerely,

Russ and Mary Johnson
Newberg