

Garrett West
Medford City Council
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House Committee on Housing and Homelessness
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

**Subject: Medford City Council Member's Support for HB 2138 –
Expanding Middle Housing to Address Oregon's Housing Crisis**

Dear Chair Marsh, Vice-Chair Breese-Iverson, and Members of the Committee,

As a member of the Medford City Council, I see firsthand how Oregon's housing crisis is impacting working families, seniors, and first-time homebuyers. The cost of housing continues to rise, pushing homeownership further out of reach for too many Oregonians. **HB 2138 takes much-needed steps to increase housing supply, remove unnecessary barriers, and expand access to affordable homeownership opportunities across the state.**

Oregon's housing shortage is driven in part by outdated policies that limit middle housing options like duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, and cottage clusters. By expanding middle housing allowances in all urban areas, eliminating restrictive zoning, and streamlining development processes, **HB 2138 will create thousands of new homes where they are needed most.** Crucially, the bill also prevents private restrictions that block middle housing development—ensuring that **homeowners can use their property to help address our state's housing needs.**

In addition to increasing supply, **HB 2138 makes targeted improvements to reduce unnecessary development delays and costs.** Combining the subdivision and land division processes, eliminating redundant traffic impact analyses for infill housing, and reducing excessive parking requirements will allow projects to move forward more efficiently. **These changes will help small and emerging builders**—many of them local businesses—produce the homes Oregonians need while keeping prices more attainable.

The bill also makes an important step toward housing equity by incentivizing affordable homeownership and accessible housing. By offering density bonuses when

developers include homes for moderate-income buyers or Type A accessible units, HB 2138 promotes housing diversity while ensuring that affordability and accessibility are at the forefront of new development. This is a critical step toward reducing homeownership disparities and ensuring that Oregon's growing communities are inclusive for all.

We know that a lack of available and affordable housing contributes to displacement, homelessness, and economic instability. The reforms in HB 2138 will help address these challenges **by making housing production faster, more efficient, and more affordable**. This bill must be part of a broader strategy to ensure that all Oregonians—regardless of income—can find a home that meets their needs.

I also note that **I would support an amendment to remove the provision repealing demolition review for houses listed in the National Register of Historic Places**. While housing production is a priority, historic preservation also plays an important role in maintaining community character. Demolition review provides a process to ensure thoughtful consideration before significant historic structures are lost. Retaining this review would allow for a balanced approach that supports both housing needs and the preservation of Oregon's architectural heritage.

I urge you to support HB 2138, amending it, and continue working toward solutions that make homeownership and rental housing more attainable for all Oregonians. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Garrett West
Medford City Council