

Submitter: Jonathan Greenwood
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2138

Dear Chair Marsh and Members of the House Committee on Housing and Homelessness,

My name is Jonathan Greenwood, and I live in the Kenton neighborhood of North Portland. I support House Bill 2138, which will help address Oregon's housing shortage by legalizing more housing on existing land, cutting red tape, and ensuring working families can find affordable homes in their communities. This bill promotes homeownership, allows residents to age in place, and revitalizes vacant lots. I urge you, we need more home choices in convenient, connected neighborhoods. This will make our urban areas more livable and easier to connect with robust public transit.

I want to add you're making a mistake not retaining SECTION 22. (1), which removes the demolition review requirement for "contributing" houses in National Register Historic Districts. Unlike local historic districts with democratic oversight, these districts are controlled by landowners and limit cities' ability to address the housing crisis. This bill would have preserved local historic protections while giving cities the flexibility to build much-needed housing. We should not allow historic districts to be wielded to protect rich white neighborhoods in amber. A whole city must be able to grow its housing abundance in every neighborhood; this prevents gentrification which is caused by focusing development only on low-income communities of color.

Thank you.