

May 9, 2023

House Committee on Rules  
Re. HB 3134 - OPPOSED

I am a long-time advocate, participant, and volunteer commission member in the arenas of both preservation and development and appreciate the need to lower obstacles to the creation of affordable housing. HOWEVER, trickle-down housing production is just as much magical thinking as trickle-down economics. I urge the committee to shelve HB 3134.

And this bill will do significant harm. It tramples Oregon's land use laws, insults and dismisses local government, and shifts massive power to corporate developers who have no vested interest in community livability, affordability, sustainability, stopping displacement, or the retention of cultural heritage.

Please give careful attention to the testimony of Restore Oregon, which I echo here:

- The impacts from by-right adjustments will be highly visible and will be felt in every neighborhood, in every community, and throughout the state and will not necessarily result in a greater quantity or more affordable housing.
- HB 3414 would not only nullify all of the detailed efforts in removing barriers to housing within historic, natural, and scenic protected areas, it would continue a well-established trend of displacement and gentrification of culturally diverse areas that deserve continued protection.
- By-right adjustments as authorized in HB 3414 will not increase the overall supply of housing, housing affordability, nor increase housing choice – there is no requirement in the bill that the adjustment be tied to the production of additional housing that would otherwise be allowed.
- Many design standards and criteria are culturally responsive and protect diverse and underrepresented histories from erasure from market-rate development.
- Historic resources are unique assets for local communities and their long-term preservation requires adherence to long standing protection rules.
- Archaeological resources require delicate attention, such as regulations governing avoidance of Native American sites.
- Design standards for Main Street and downtown areas are necessary to ensure these special places remain walkable and economically thriving commercial cores of Oregon's communities.
- Preservationists throughout the state have worked collaboratively with local governments on sensible regulations and procedures that allow new residential development in historic areas.

- By-right adjustments will break the community trust of local government officials and staff undermining decades of collaboration.
- By-right adjustments undermine a clear and implementable land use system that already includes local variance and adjustment standards allowing for a relief valve when circumstances dictate

I hope you share these concerns and DO NOT PASS FORWARD this gravely misconceived legislation. There are better ways to address our housing and homeless challenges.

Thank you,

Peggy Moretti  
*Executive Director, Emeritus - Restore Oregon*