



**OREGON PROPERTY OWNERS
ASSOCIATION**

March 4, 2025

Senate Housing Committee
Oregon State Capitol

Re: Senate Bill 1095

Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill 1095. We have deep reservations about the bill and its impact on Oregon property owners, especially elderly homeowners.

The intent of the bill seems to be an effort to charge a fee and impose a lien upon vacant homes. Assuming the lien acts like most liens, it will eventually subject the property to foreclosure for nonpayment. The proceeds of the assessed fees are dedicated to affordable housing construction.

The tie between vacant homes and affordable housing is tenuous at best. While the bill contains exemptions from the vacancy requirements for health, active military service or first responder's duties, there are multiple reasons why a home may be vacant for an extended period, and the listed exemptions are vague and undefined. For example, here are a list of reasons why a home may be vacant for more than 180 days in a calendar year:

1. The owner has a job requiring frequent traveling.
2. The owners are snowbirds.
3. The owner has an ill family member that they must care for.
4. The owner has relocated and is having difficulty selling the home.
5. The home is a model home within a subdivision.
6. The home is in a new subdivision but has not sold.
7. The owner is away on a non-medical family emergency.
8. The owner has applied for land use approval to convert the home to a different use, but the land use decision has not been finalized by the city or is on appeal.
9. The owner is making repairs to the home or property.

I'm sure there are multiple other fact patterns that fall outside of the exemptions listed in the bill. Why on earth would we punish any of the homeowners in this situation? What does their absence have to do with the need for affordable housing? Why should their home be the subject of a foreclosure proceeding?

This bill is a solution in search of a problem. It is rare that a homeowner will voluntarily leave their home vacant for an extended period of time "just because". If the home is vacant, there's a good reason (possibly one of the reasons listed above). Punishing the property owner in any of those situations seems grossly unfair.

If the vacancy is creating a nuisance, the city already maintains authority for resolving that problem, including the ability to abate the nuisance and charge the property owner for the nuisance abatement, assessing fines, and potentially foreclosing the lien on the property. This bill isn't needed as a method of abating nuisances caused by vacant properties.

Additionally, how is the city going to determine whether a home is vacant? Are there going to be vacancy police counting the days that a home is unoccupied? Will the property owner be required to call the city before they leave and inform the city that their home will be unoccupied for a certain period of time? Will the owner have to give a reason why the home is empty?

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this bill and ask the committee to not move forward with the concept. We're happy to work with the sponsors on affordable housing

Contact: dhunnicutt@oregonpropertyowners.org