

**Testimony of Anneliese Koehler, State and Regional Affairs Advisor
In Support of Senate Bill 141 A
House Committee on Housing
April 29, 2021**



Metro is the regional government for the greater Portland metropolitan area, tasked by Oregon statute with making decisions every six years about how and where the region will grow. Our region has a strong track record of supporting the core purposes of Oregon's statewide planning system – protecting farms and forests by facilitating efficient urban development, while providing additional room for people and jobs by expanding the urban growth boundary when needed.

A key component of efficient urban development is dense, multi-use commercial and residential development in centers and corridors and near transit areas. Vertical housing development zones are a helpful tool available to local governments to stimulate additional housing density and create vibrant urban communities where people can live, work and shop in their neighborhoods.

In addition, vertical housing development zones work hand-in-hand with Metro's Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) program to create vibrant downtowns and center. Our TOD program provides funding to stimulate private development of higher-density, affordable and mixed-use projects near transit, and vertical housing development zones' partial tax exemptions have been important in stimulating the construction of these projects in the Metro region.

For the 2021 session, the Metro Council's priorities call for supporting legislation that will provide additional tools and authority to local governments to address housing supply and affordability. The bill before you today advances this goal by revising the statute to reflect actual equalized floors and therefore encourage projects to develop more housing. This strengthens this tool currently available to local governments and will stimulate increased housing density.

The Metro Council urges you to support SB 141 A.