

Submitter: Lauren Creany
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: HB3414

House Rules Committee Members,

I am writing to oppose the dash-17 amendment to House Bill 3414, which would subvert Land Use Goal 14 and allow all cities in Oregon a one-time expansion of their urban growth boundaries (UGBs). This will not solve our housing shortage but will result in sprawl development that Oregonians agree we're better off without and it would also mean that cities do not need to show that they have done all they reasonably can to meet the diverse and affordable housing needs of residents inside UGBs, close to where people work, go to school, and shop – key ingredients to building healthy, livable neighborhoods.

The dash-17 amendment to HB 3414 continues to ignore a major barrier to more diverse and affordable housing inside UGBs: lack of funding for infrastructure. Our communities already have a backlog of needs for new and upgraded sewers, sidewalks, and more. We have collectively failed to invest in needed infrastructure. Adding more land only exacerbates this challenge.

It also allows local governments to once again avoid rezoning land inside UGBs – the politically more difficult, but necessary, action – to allow more housing and to remove unnecessary local barriers to development. With 70 percent of all housing and all residential lands zoned for detached single-family housing – the most expensive and land-consuming type of housing – we can and must build better inside our UGBs, by allowing even more housing types and more affordable housing.

We have underused land inside our UGBs that should be converted to housing. For example, currently, we have more parking spaces for cars than we have housing for people, yet we have vast areas of underused parking lots and strip malls. We must make it easy to convert those to housing.

Finally, making it easier to expand outward makes it harder to address climate change and to reduce fire risk. Paving over more lands, adding more roads, and expanding into the wildland-urban interface will only increase these problems.

Sincerely,
Lauren Creany
Portland, OR