

Submitter: Adam Gaya
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 Adam Gaya and I live in a recently created condominium in the Vernon Neighborhood in Northeast Portland. I am excited to join Portland: Neighbors Welcome in supporting House Bill 2138 to help address Oregon's housing shortage by legalizing more housing across the state with land already available in our cities and towns and cutting red tape that prevents working families from choosing homes that allow them to live affordably in their own communities. I also specifically urge the committee to retain the language in SECTION 22. (1), which repeals the requirement for demolition review for houses which are listed as "contributing" in National Register Historic Districts. Undemocratic and landowner-controlled National Register of Historic Places districts are distinct from local historic districts that have democratic oversight from a body — the city council — that is legally allowed to consider any factors other than historic preservation, and can consider the interests of tenants as well as landowners.

As a first-time homebuyer in 2022 I was deeply privileged to be able to purchase a small 90 year old craftsman house in the Vernon neighborhood, a walkable inner northeast neighborhood with easy access to transit, groceries, schools, and my work. The only reason I was able to become a homeowner is because the small 5,000 sq ft lot my house sits on had a second unit built on it and it was condoized prior to being put up for sale. This is also true for my neighbor, a single mother and first time homebuyer who purchased the 2nd unit in our small condominium at the same time. We were able to purchase our homes for ~20% less than any other house listed in the neighborhood. I live in the type of middle-housing created by Oregon's existing middle housing policies and which would be encouraged by HB2138, I love it and the stability it provides to me and my family has been life-changing. I want more Oregonians to have access to the options I did, and have the opportunity to reap the benefits and stability of homeownership.