

Testimony of Randy Tucker, Legislative Affairs Manager

In Opposition to House Bill 3072

House Committee on Housing

March 4, 2021



Metro

Chair Fahey and Members of the Committee:

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 when needed by expanding the urban growth boundary.

In recent years, we have worked with many partners to improve how we do this work. We have:

- financially supported local efforts to make the most of existing land
- adopted a 50-year plan for urban and rural reserves
- required concept planning to ensure that UGB expansions will result in needed housing
- added four well-planned areas to the UGB as proposed by four cities in the region
- ensured that those areas allow “middle housing” types now allowed under HB 2001
- passed legislation authorizing mid-cycle adjustments to the UGB when necessary
- continuously improved our technical analyses that support growth management decisions
- received voter approval for \$652.8 million to support investments in affordable housing and approximately \$250 million/year for supportive housing services.

For the 2021 session, the Metro Council’s priorities call for supporting legislation that will expand affordable home ownership opportunities, increase those opportunities for BIPOC households that currently experience significant disparities in home ownership, and provide additional tools and authority to local governments to address housing supply and affordability. In this very hearing we are urging you to pass legislation that calls on local governments in our region to develop housing production strategies linked to a regional analysis of housing need. So we are acutely aware of the importance of addressing the housing needs of all people in our region, including those with low and moderate incomes. However, we believe that we can and should do so within the framework, and with respect for the integrity, of Oregon’s existing land use system.

HB 3072 would represent a significant departure from the principles of that system that has served Oregon so well. First, it would authorize UGB expansions without respect to whether a need for land can be demonstrated – a concern we have previously raised about other legislation before this Committee. But this bill would go further by transferring the authority to decide whether to expand the UGB from the elected, and therefore accountable, public bodies who currently have that responsibility to any private landowner or developer associated with any of the 20,728 acres of urban reserves that are intended to accommodate the orderly growth of the greater Portland region over the next few decades.

The Metro Council opposes HB 3072 and respectfully requests that you decline to move it forward. We look forward to continuing to work with you on other approaches that can address the housing needs of working Oregonians.