

Submitter: Alicia Hudson
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1095
Chairperson Pham and Committee Members;

I strongly oppose SB 1095, which proposes punitive fees on vacant homes. This measure misdirects our efforts, failing to address the fundamental challenges of affordable housing development.

Oregon counties are already actively promoting affordable housing through substantial incentives, including tax abatements, expedited permitting, and reduced fees. These local initiatives have demonstrably increased construction without unfairly penalizing property owners for temporary vacancies. Furthermore, existing nuisance laws effectively address problematic properties, offering a targeted solution to neighborhood concerns without broad vacancy penalties.

We should build upon successful strategies and programs created under existing laws such 2023 House Bill 2001. That legislation allocated \$20 million to help develop more modular housing by creating a modular housing fund for low-income and middle-income housing projects. It also established a pilot project to assist developers building affordable to moderate-income level homes. These investments directly stimulate affordable housing projects.

However, a critical gap remains: support for individuals building their own homes, multi-generational housing, and ADUs. These individuals are excluded from current programs and regulatory efforts, which causes significantly increased costs for families wanting to build their own affordable housing.

Instead of imposing counterproductive fees that could discourage property ownership and depress values, the legislature should focus on removing barriers to construction. Reducing permit fees and streamlining regulations would directly lower costs and incentivize new affordable housing projects.

SB 1095 diverts resources from proven, locally driven solutions. I urge you to reject this measure and instead prioritize initiatives that reduce construction barriers, ensuring a fair, affordable, and effective approach to addressing Oregon's affordable housing needs.

Thank you.
Alicia Hudson