

Submitter: Patricia Brandt
On Behalf Of: Portland Neighbors Welcome
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,

Our names are Terry and Patty Brandt and we have lived in Eastmoreland for 48 years. We join Portland: Neighbors Welcome in supporting House Bill 2138, which will positively affect 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. This bill will help people live near jobs that invest in their community, create opportunities for more people who want to become homeowners, allow more people to stay in their communities as they age, and make use of vacant lots to help neighborhoods be vibrant.

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 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. This bill retains Oregon cities' ability to preserve historical resources and does not impact local historic districts but grants cities the flexibility they need to address our ongoing housing crisis and ensure that we can build housing for Oregonians of all ages, wages, and stages of life.

We continue to be against establishing a historic district in Eastmoreland. This nomination took 6 years and as you can imagine, the properties and owners were continually changing over that time period. SHPO determined that those against did not meet the 50% goal for homeowners. But you must understand, 25% of the neighbors did not take any action and their nonaction was looked upon as a positive vote in favor.

I testified in Washington DC before the Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Laws That Have Gone Astray. Establishing historic districts in Eastmoreland, Laurelhurst, and Irvington are merely ways that neighborhood associations attempt to control development and growth in their beautiful neighborhoods.

Attached is a letter we sent to the Eastmoreland Neighborhood Association after we'd learned about a letter of support to change HB 2138. This letter that was sent on behalf of Jane Monson, President, does not represent all of Eastmoreland's 1600 homes.

I would like to remind our neighbor, Senator Taylor, that her individual decision regarding this house bill does not represent all of her constituents'.

Sincerely,

Terry and Patty Brandt
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