

Hello, my name is Elijah Probst and I'm here to testify as a 32-year-old human, father, son, a Buckman, Portland neighbor, an Oregonian by way of the California to Oregon trail (more on that later), and an American.

Lawmakers: no Oregonian in their right mind is going to argue with your effort to build more housing. The argument is where the housing should be built and what should it look like.

Most Oregonians believe climate change is real and one of the greatest Oregonian policies of the 20th century has been the urban growth boundary around the PDX metro area. This means that the PDX metro area must become denser and taller.

Most of the opposition to this bill comes from Portland residents of the Laurelhurst, Ladds Addition, & Irvington neighborhoods. These people live in large, grand, houses on pleasant streets that contain relatively few businesses or anything else going on for that matter compared to my neighborhood of Buckman or any other neighborhood adjacent to them. They want things to stay that way and feel entitled to be insulated from any needed changes happening with respect to housing and the built environment in Portland. Their argument again the full provisions of HB2138 is based on an appeal to our sentimentality that they are "stewards of a historic district", largely to be frozen in time. Put even more succinctly, they argue that the neighborhoods of others should be the ones to be developed because the existing housing stock there is uglier and less aesthetically interesting than theirs.

Lawmakers: Laurelhurst, Ladds Addition, & Irvington are nice neighborhoods, but they are not the Great Pyramids of Giza, the Parthenon, or even a majestic grove of ancient trees. They are streets and houses in Stumptown, very close in proximity to downtown, and the landed gentry of Portland needs to be called out for doing exactly what the NIMBYs did all throughout the state of California they claim to despise and be so different from. Houses, generally, are functional things – similar to the Han Dynasty urn dropped by the famous Chinese artist Ai Weiwei. I trust I do not need to further explain that metaphor.

Please for the love of all of us who are not the landed Portland gentry, make the right call and do not water down HB 2138 by caving to NIMBY pressure.