

Submitter: Randy Tucker
On Behalf Of: Myself
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: HB3414

I am writing in strong opposition to the proposed -17 amendment to HB 3414, the proposed -19 amendment to HB 3414, and any other amendments that would allow all cities in Oregon, and force Metro, to expand urban growth boundaries in complete defiance of our current land use laws and sound planning.

In 25 years of working on and closely following land use legislation, I've heard a lot of bad ideas, but rarely have I heard a worse idea than this. It's wrong on many levels but let me just mention a couple:

--A shortage of land is not the reason for the current crises of homelessness and housing affordability. Many cities across the country that don't have urban growth boundaries are experiencing similar crises.

--Expanding UGBs alone will not get housing built. Housing requires infrastructure and financing in addition to land, which in the best cases often take a decade or more to come together. Infrastructure is available inside existing UGBs, where there are thousands of acres of underused land TODAY. There's a reason the overwhelming majority of housing units produced in the Portland region in the last 25 years have been created inside the original 1979 UGB: the availability of infrastructure and the proximity to existing services and amenities. Adding more land at the edges of UGBs just exacerbates the existing challenge of providing infrastructure to land that's already inside the boundary and does nothing to address short-term needs.

--UGBs can currently be expanded through existing processes by demonstrating a need for land. Developers and realtors consistently propose legislation to get around this fundamental and crucial requirement. This proposal is just another bad idea in a long history of efforts to evade this kind of accountability and will set a terrible precedent for the future of efficient land management in Oregon.

--Unnecessary expansions will result in paving over more rural land and exacerbate climate change.

This proposal is a transparent effort to exploit current problems to roll back decades of smart land use planning. Don't be fooled. Please reject any bill or amendment that would throw out existing protections to create this sort of blanket UGB expansion authority.

Thank you,
Randy Tucker