

Submitter: Sheila Dooley
On Behalf Of: Signed up to testify today but no time
Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development
Measure: SB1537

The following is the testimony I had planned to give at today's hearing.

Expanding urban growth boundaries doesn't help solve Oregon's housing shortage. It makes more sense to invest in the real problem, which is the lack of infrastructure for housing within the existing UGBs, which this bill addresses.

We have land available within these existing UGBs and don't need to override Oregon's land use laws. There is already a process in place for expanding UGBs when the need is there.

Another consideration is that cities may be unaware of how much available land they actually have for housing. In September 2023 a Housing Needs Analysis and Buildable Lands Inventory in The Dalles showed that the total housing unit capacity was more than 2,800 units over what is projected to be needed in the next 20 years.

In addition to vacant land within UGBs, there are also vacant and underutilized buildings. Infrastructure funding would make new housing possible.

Building within existing UGBs also enables people to live near the services they need, which helps fight climate change. It also makes living more affordable by reducing transportation needs.

In contrast building houses in the wildland-urban interface increases fire risk and takes away land needed for agricultural and forest use, and wildlife habitat. It is more expensive to live there and bring infrastructure in as it further from existing infrastructure and services.

Please amend SB 1537 and remove the UGB expansion provision.

Thank you.

Sheila Dooley