



Oregon

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TO: The Honorable Representative Julie Fahey, Chair
Members of House Committee on Housing

FROM: Emma Land, Legislative Coordinator
Palmer Mason, Senior Policy Advisor

RE: **House Bill 2708**



HB 2708 would allow cities to expand their urban growth boundaries (UGBs) by up to 50 acres under certain circumstances. While the department takes no position on this bill, we would like to highlight several issues for the committee's consideration.

HB 2708 would allow an on-going pilot project currently limited to two cities to be expanded statewide without evidence of success. As authorized by 2016 legislation, the cities of Bend and Redmond are attempting to convince developers to provide affordable housing on lands outside of the UGB. At present, one developer has committed to this pilot project in Bend but, because no developer has committed to Redmond, it would seem that the concept behind HB 2708 has not been conclusively proven to be successful.

HB 2708 lacks key protections for resource lands found in current law. Most notably, the bill does not require a demonstration of need based on population growth or lack of buildable land to justify the UGB expansion. HB 2708 also does not require that the UGB expansion occur first in urban reserves or rural residential zones, which are areas already equipped with some level of appropriate infrastructure and planning. Lastly, while the bill does protect high-value farmland, other important resource lands could be adversely impacted by conflicts with urban development.