



WALLOWA COUNTY
Planning Department
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March 21, 2023

To: House Committee on Economic Development and Small Business

Chair Representative Janelle Bynum, Members of the Committee,

I am writing to the committee to express support for House Bill 3317. As the Planning Director for Wallowa County, I frequently hear business owners and residents of the county expressing concern over the lack of affordable housing, and therefore the inability to recruit employees for open positions. Wallowa County is a scenic area, and is a desirable place to work and live. Current metrics for identifying "available lands" for housing are flawed, and do not account for variables including a land-owners intent or ability to develop, or sell. The cost of construction is increasing rapidly. Contractors in a rural area like Wallowa County are stretched thin and booked ahead for months if not years. Second homes in a scenic area are desirable, as are short-term rentals. All of these factors exacerbate available and affordable housing. We need creative solutions to allow housing and economic growth.

HB 3317 offers a unique solution which can help increase the opportunity to create affordable work-force housing.

Sincerely,

Franz Goebel
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