

Submitter: Leon Barrett
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2138

Dear Chair Marsh and Members of the House Committee on Housing and Homelessness,

My name is Leon Barrett and I live in the Concordia neighborhood of Portland. I join Portland: Neighbors Welcome in supporting House Bill 2138, which will positively affect Oregon's housing shortage by legalizing more housing across the state with land already available in our cities and towns and cutting red tape that prevents working families from choosing homes that allow them to live affordably in their own communities. This bill will help people live near jobs that invest in their community, create opportunities for more people who want to become homeowners, allow more people to stay in their communities as they age, and make use of vacant lots to help neighborhoods be vibrant.

I also specifically urge the committee to retain the language in SECTION 22. (1), which repeals the requirement for demolition review for houses which are listed as "contributing" in National Register Historic Districts. Undemocratic and landowner-controlled National Register of Historic Places districts are distinct from local historic districts that have democratic oversight from a body — the city council — that is legally allowed to consider any factors other than historic preservation, and can consider the interests of tenants as well as landowners. This bill retains Oregon cities' ability to preserve historical resources and does not impact local historic districts, but grants cities the flexibility they need to address our ongoing housing crisis and ensure that we can build housing for Oregonians of all ages, wages, and stages of life.

Thank you.