

Submitter: Kathy Lincoln
On Behalf Of: Oregon's farm and forest land
Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development
Measure: SB1537

Chair Jama and Senate Committee Members: SB 1537 has many good provisions that will help provide much needed housing in Oregon. However, the provision allowing changes to the UGB expansion process is unnecessary. Oregon already has well over 10,000 acres of vacant land designated for residential use, inside our cities' current urban growth boundaries. In addition, many Oregon cities and towns have vacant and underutilized buildings that can be re-purposed for new housing. These locations are in areas with existing infrastructure, such as streets, utility lines and public transportation. Such housing is more climate friendly because of less reliance on driving to jobs, schools and shopping. Housing constructed on the edges of cities is more expensive because of the cost to extend infrastructure. The distance from jobs, schools and shopping makes it more difficult and expensive for low income families and contributes to needless GHG emissions. Finally, our current land use system has worked well to preserve forest and farmland for its highest and best use. We need to keep in mind that those precious resources cannot be reclaimed once they are paved over. Please do not start chipping away at the system that has worked so well for so many years. Take the UGB expansion provisions out of SB 1537. Thank you.