

Submitter: Christopher 'Paul' Jeffreys  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB974

I am strongly opposed to removing Design Review as proposed in the SB974 -1 Amendment Section 12 (5) on page 10 and Section 13 (5) on page 11.

I have been a Lead Design Architect for the past 27-years in Portland and presented to many Design Review Commissions and Design Review staff for a wide range of projects including many significant downtown new buildings.

I have worked at SERA Architects, Ankrom Moisan, and LRS Architects and have always found the design review process to be supportive, successful and valuable in improving the general design, streetscape, and landscape.

In my experience the process has never impeded or caused problems for projects or for the developer/owner. In fact, if done right, it gives valuable early confirmation on the design direction of the project and reduces time and expense.

Key to Design Review is that it encourages and maintains the continued character and features that make Portland such a livable, walkable, vibrant city. I am from the UK and studied and practiced there for 15-years. While at Oxford Brookes University, Portland was cited as a progressive urban design success - world renowned example of a livable city!

Resilience, active frontages, pedestrian experience, scale, neighborhood connections, landscape, open space in the right space, robust quality material choices are all things that should be presented and discussed in a public forum where neighbors, commissioners, planners, owners, can listen, understand, offer opinions, oppose or support, projects that can change the way the city looks, works, and lasts. It is and should be a democratic transparent process as these projects often shape the lives of portlander's and visitor's.

I am also very frustrated that this amendment was added to this bill at the last minute - looks as if it was almost 'snuck in'. This has given no time for people to understand its implications and offer testimony. The process and debate should be more transparent. This is not the Portland way.

Paul Jeffreys