

Submitter: Lach Litwer
On Behalf Of: Columbia Gorge Capital and Thrive Hood River
Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3145

Good afternoon Chair Marsh, Vice Chairs Breece-Iverson and Anderson and Members of the Committee including Rep Jeff Helfrich of my own 52nd District,

My name is Lach Litwer, and I am a workforce housing developer serving rural Oregon communities. I am also here representing Thrive Hood River, a land use advocacy nonprofit that believes in equitable and accessible housing solutions that fit well in rural cities like Hood River, Cascade Locks, Odell, and Mount Hood Parkdale. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 3145.

Rural Oregon is struggling to build enough housing for the people who keep our communities running—teachers, nurses, farmworkers, and small business employees. The traditional approach to homebuilding is too slow and too expensive to meet today's demand, to say nothing of our anticipated future needs. We need more tools, and HB 3145 provides them.

In my work, I've seen firsthand how on-site construction faces real scaling challenges... particularly in climates with an abundance of "liquid sunshine" such as we see West of the Cascades, and places where freezing and snow are normal much of the year such as we see East of the mountains. Innovative construction methods—like modular homes and mass timber—can deliver quality, energy-efficient housing at lower costs and faster speeds than how we build today. And our communities can see how factory-based production can bring stable jobs to rural communities while solving our housing crisis at the same time. And I'm here to tell you that our rural Oregon communities (and companies like my own) are ready, willing, and able to be leaders in this new strategy for building homes for Oregon Families.

Without housing, rural economies suffer. We can't attract or retain the workforce we need. But when we make it easier and more affordable to build homes, we strengthen communities, stabilize families, and support local businesses. HB 3145 is a critical step toward making that happen.

I urge your support for this bill, and I appreciate your time. Thank you.