



March 4, 2025

TO: Members of the House Committee Housing and Homelessness
FR: Duke Shepard, Oregon Business & Industry
RE: HB 2138

OBI is a statewide association representing businesses across a wide variety of industries from all 36 of Oregon's counties. In addition to being the statewide chamber of commerce, OBI is the state affiliate for the National Association of Manufacturers and the National Retail Federation. Our 1,600 member companies, more than 75% of which are small businesses, employ over 250,000 Oregonians. Oregon's private-sector businesses drive a healthy, prosperous economy for the benefit of everyone.

Addressing housing scarcity requires a comprehensive approach, with increasing supply being one of the most effective solutions. House Bill 2138 represents a positive step in this direction.

To achieve meaningful progress that benefits Oregonians, it would be helpful to further reduce the regulatory and tax burdens that have historically hindered housing construction in the state. As noted by OBI in other venues, Oregon should consider adopting strategies similar to those ordered by Washington's governor in December.

It is also important to recognize that housing affordability is influenced not only by the availability of housing but also by the costs of taxes, utilities, transportation, food, and childcare. While HB 2138 is a significant policy improvement, its success will depend on Oregon's commitment to avoiding additional policies that could increase the overall cost of living and cost of doing business. Ensuring access to affordable housing and, equally importantly, good-paying jobs created by Oregon business will be essential to achieving long-term affordability for all Oregonians.

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