

DevNW

DEVELOPING THRIVING COMMUNITIES

March 17, 2025

House Committee on Housing and Homelessness
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Support for HB 2258 with the -1 amendment

Dear Chair Marsh, Vice Chair Breese-Iverson, Vice Chair Andersen and Members of the Committee:

My name is Emily Reiman and I'm the CEO of DevNW, an affordable housing development and asset-building agency serving Lane, Linn, Benton, Lincoln, Marion, Polk and Clackamas Counties. We embark on comprehensive community development throughout our seven-county service area through services aimed at increasing financial stability for individuals and families as well as through economic and housing development. Our seven-county footprint includes numerous jurisdictions, giving us a unique understanding of the extent to which our housing crisis is not isolated to local jurisdictions; it is statewide and we need statewide solutions to match.

DevNW is in support of HB 2258 -1, which will help agencies like ours in responding to the housing crisis by both increasing the density and types of housing we can build and easing the development process through pre-approved building plans.

The changes in this bill will give developers a great level of efficiency in time and costs - across all jurisdictions - that we need to create new housing. Navigating excessive and arcane structure and site design requirements in each location has led to a slow and cumbersome development process, hampering our ability to put new units on the ground. As an affordable homeownership developer, we typically use 3-4 home designs and repeat them throughout a Community Land Trust subdivision. Instead of being able to send those 4 designs to a jurisdiction's permitting team for umbrella approval, if we use the same 3-bedroom home eight times, we have to send it for 8 different permit reviews and pay eight fees. And if those eight applications go to two different staff members, we might get very different questions back from each reviewer – even within the same jurisdiction. The inefficiency is worse across jurisdictions: we might send the same house plans for approval in two different cities; we'll get 3-4 substantive questions back from a city that is motivated to produce housing, and 11 pages of questions used as a delay tactic by cities that aren't interested in more housing. This wastes time and money that we can't afford, as a state, in the midst of our housing crisis.

The clients we work with are putting in the hard work to become mortgage ready, they are engaging in financial and homebuyer education and counseling. They are saving for a downpayment, they are paying down debt, they are working to increase their income, all while

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managing increasing costs for food, utilities and other basic needs. We believe that HB 2258 -1 ensures that jurisdictions and developers can do our part to increase the rate of housing production for these families by reducing the time and cost of reviewing and approving building plans and siting for specific parcels across Oregon. We are encouraged by the provisions in the bill that support higher density development through FAR standards and allow for developers to submit building plans for statewide approval—this will significantly expedite our development process.

We believe increasing the development of affordable housing across the continuum should be our North Star. We support the Governor's statewide approach to the entirety of the housing continuum and appreciate the opportunity to engage with her team on this important bill. We encourage your support of HB 2258-1.

Thank you for your work to help Oregonians achieve their dream of homeownership.

Sincerely,



Emily Reiman
CEO