

Submitter: Laurie Matthews

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Rules

Measure: HB3414

I oppose this bill given it will have an irreversible impact on our state's protected natural and cultural resources, and is not tied clearly enough to methods that will increase affordable housing. Giving developers free reign has not worked to this point, and will not work in the future. And there are so many other options to make converting or rehabilitating existing buildings which should get priority for variances since they not only retain some of our historic resources, but help eliminate waste by reusing materials. Here are some specific reasons for my opposition to this bill:

The impacts from by-right adjustments will be highly visible and will be felt in every neighborhood, in every community, and throughout the state and will not necessarily result in a greater quantity or more affordable housing.

By-right adjustments as authorized in HB 3414 will not increase the overall supply of housing, housing affordability, nor increase housing choice – there is no requirement in the bill that the adjustment be tied to the production of additional housing that would otherwise be allowed.

Many design standards and criteria are culturally responsive and protect diverse and underrepresented histories from erasure from market-rate development.

Historic resources are unique assets for local communities and their long-term preservation requires adherence to longstanding protection rules.

Archaeological resources require delicate attention, such as regulations governing avoidance of Native American sites.