

***NOTE: This testimony was written before Oregon REALTORS® was made aware of forthcoming amendments to HB 2950, and as such, is only reflective of our position towards the bill as introduced. We hope the amendments to HB 2950 will be sufficient to elicit our support.***

Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, Vice-Chair Finger McDonald, and members of the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong opposition to HB 2950. For the record, my name is Brock Nation and I'm the Policy Director at Oregon REALTORS®. Oregon REALTORS® is an industry association comprised of roughly 18,000 members who work as real estate brokers, real estate principal brokers, real estate property managers, and affiliated industry professionals.

HB 2950 is highly problematic from start to finish. First, it's duplicative. DLCD's Community Involvement Advisory Committee exists "to assure widespread public involvement in all phases of the planning process. ... Membership is intended to reflect the geographic, demographic and socio-economic diversity of the state."

Second, while public engagement in the land use process is well intended, it has also enabled significant NIMBY opposition to housing-related planning decisions. As the state seeks to streamline housing production, this is simply counterproductive. If anything, the bill should direct restrictions on public engagement in quasi-juridical land use decisions to prevent continued opposition to housing and the filing of nuisance appeals.

Third, the composition of the advisory committee directed by the bill excludes numerous key stakeholders, including those representing housing and real estate. Additionally, it excludes industrial, commercial, and renewable energy stakeholders – all of which are significant impacted by existing NIMBYism in our land use system. Further, eight of the 17 committee members would be individuals with a land use law and planning background.

Finally, the bill directs DLCD to develop recommendations to amend, implement, and review land use goals under various planning statutes, including ORS 197.230. ORS 197.230, which describes the considerations for adopting or amending a land use goal, does not include a housing, commercial, or industrial component. Only land conservation is considered. Housing, economic, and private property interests must only be assessed.

In sum, HB 2950 is unnecessary, counterproductive, and stacked in favor of anti-growth and anti-development activists. The Oregon Housing Needs Analysis – which this body passed not even two years ago – directed all public bodies, including the legislature, to remove barriers to housing production, not to create new ones.

I urge you in the strongest terms to reject HB 2950. Thank you for your consideration; I'm happy to answer any questions.