

Submitter: Karon Johnson
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2422

Dear Chair Marsh, Vice-chair Andersen, Vice-Chair Bresse-Iverson, and members of the House Committee on Housing and Homelessness, Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 2422.

I oppose this bill, which would override existing state policy that requires a planning process to increase dwelling densities on thousands of acres of rural land by allowing counties to more than double the dwelling density on rural lands, increase it to one house per acre without taking an exception to Goal 14.

This bill's proposal ignores the fact that with climate change, higher density in rural areas is not desirable. We are facing this problem in Bend, where the City wants to add 100 acres of affordable housing immediately to the south of Knott Road, only two miles from the start of the National Forest Service land. The fact of wildfires makes any such proposals dangerous. As the recent fires in California demonstrate, one-acre lots are dangerous: they aren't serviced by adequate water infrastructure to combat wildfires, but the density is ideal to promote the spread of such wildfires. The new reality due to climate change: housing in rural areas should be far apart, and higher density housing should only be allowed within city limits where adequate fire-fighting facilities are available.

All this is in addition to the increased infrastructure costs of roads, and the negative impact such higher density has on existing farm and forest operations. Please do not support this bill.

Sincerely,
Karon Johnson

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