

February 10, 2026

Testimony in Support of SB 1564

Chair Pham, Vice Chair Anderson, Senator Jama, Senator Nash, Senator Peterson:

My name is Mark Wilk and I am the elected Woodburn City Councilor for Ward 2. I have lived in Woodburn for nearly 30 years. Prior to becoming a Councilor in 2023, I was a legal services lawyer in Oregon for 40 years. I have had extensive experience representing clients in housing matters, including unlawful rent charges, bad housing conditions, denial of homeownership opportunity, and discrimination, and in advocating for affordable housing.

There remains tremendous unmet housing need for Woodburn residents, despite our best efforts and recent growth. Many of my neighbors rent out rooms or garages to family members and friends who cannot find affordable housing. I have been asked many times if I know where a family can find housing in our community. Need far exceeds supply.

Our City Council envisions a community in which our residents live, work and thrive within our city. One recent new employer has created 2000 new jobs, and we have just added additional industrial land to meet projected employment needs of our residents. These employers need their workers and family members to have safe and affordable housing.

In a sense we are victims of our own success in attracting new economic and housing development. We have essentially exhausted our supply of new land for housing. SB 1564 offers an unique opportunity to meet existing housing needs on a parcel that has long been a natural next location for development, abutting existing new housing and infrastructure to the south, I-5 to the west and major arterials to the north and east.

Passage of SB 1564 is necessary because the provisions for a one-time Urban Growth Boundary expansion under SB 1537 (2024) will not work for this development to proceed. We do support proposed amendments to SB 1537 in this session (HB 4035) to help in the Governor's declared housing emergency as it is important to our region and the State in the long term. But SB 1564 is also necessary to meet our critical needs here in Woodburn in an expedited manner.

The proposal for development of this parcel includes the regular process for annexation to the City. Development will provide not less than 600 new residential units, with 30 percent

of them subject to affordability restrictions for a period of not less than 60 years. The owner is committing to partner with local nonprofits to provide affordable housing and services.

Passage of SB 1564 is also a matter of promoting equity. Woodburn is the largest Latinx-majority city in the state. We are proud of our Motto: “The City of Unity.” We understand our responsibility to promote growth that benefits all in our community. This bill helps do that.

Mark Wilk, Woodburn City Councilor for Ward 2