



February 19, 2024

Representative Julie Fahey, Chair  
House Committee on Rules  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

**RE: Support for HB 4026 with the -1 amendment**

We write to offer support for HB 4026 with the -1 amendment.

The City of Hillsboro is surrounded by the Metro Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) on three sides. We have been one of the fastest growing cities in the state over the last three decades and are deeply familiar with the state and regional process that is required in order to request a UGB expansion to accommodate housing or job growth.

The existing process is long, expensive, and litigious. It allows ample opportunity for interested stakeholders to be involved in the public process and make their voice heard. Goal 1 is citizen involvement. If a city did not comply with Goal 1, then on appeal LUBA or LCDC would remand the decision back to the city so that it could satisfy the citizen involvement requirements associated with our land use system.

By way of example, Hillsboro started planning for the South Hillsboro expansion area in the 1990s. Once the City began the formal work required by land use laws to request a UGB amendment, we were met with opposition from land use advocates every step of the way. The litigation that ensued tied the South Hillsboro expansion area up for years, and it eventually took an act of the Legislature to eliminate the litigation and formally establish South Hillsboro within the UGB. South Hillsboro began annexing into the City in 2015, and to date, over 2,700 housing units of all types have been delivered with another 5,500 units expected to be delivered in the next several years. In other words, the land use process in Oregon already takes years, if not decades, to navigate in order to secure land capacity for needed housing. The Legislature would be wise to ensure that the years of work and public investment it takes to request a UGB amendment will not be at risk of referral. If Oregon is going to meet its ambitious housing production goals, the Legislature ought to remove barriers to housing production that are within its control. HB 4026 with the -1 amendment is a great example of a barrier that should be removed immediately.

We are deeply troubled by the recent effort to refer an Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) amendment adopted by North Plains to the May ballot. Not only because it adversely impacts our neighboring city and upsets the substantial investment of public dollars and staff time required to get to where they are today, but most importantly because of the terrible precedent it will set if allowed to stand. Just last session this body authorized the Oregon Housing Needs Analysis (OHNA). Once implemented, cities will begin receiving housing production targets. We are very concerned that the referrals will be weaponized to quash not only UGB expansion decisions, but the far more frequent decisions cities will have to make to facilitate infill and redevelopment within their borders. We encourage you to put a stop to these efforts now before they metastasize into broadly implemented tactics by those within

UGBs who don't want more neighbors, or by those who fundamentally oppose any efforts to urbanize greenfield lands for needed housing.

HB 4026 with the -1 amendment is one action the Legislature can take right now to reassure cities that they should be planning for needed housing and that when they compete the local land use process, it will not be undone by forces opposed to growth.

Sincerely,



Andy Smith  
Government Relations Manager