

Submitter: Matt Kelly
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB974

Dear Chair Senator Pham and Members of the Senate Committee on Housing and Development,

I am writing today to express my support for Senate Bill 974. A lack of housing and soaring costs are hurting families and harming our economic prosperity throughout Central Oregon. Updating policies to reduce the time it takes to get housing units approved by local governments will lead to an increase in both housing production and affordability.

I, and the Partners for Affordable Housing coalition members throughout Central Oregon, share a vision that housing will be available and affordable to everyone. We are a diverse coalition of impacted people and organizations developing and educating on bold solutions that increase housing supply and lower housing costs in our region. Supporting solutions like SB 974 - optimizing the housing production approval process - is a core mission of our organization. We are grateful to senators Anderson, Jama and Broadman for bringing forward this bill.

We specifically support the passage of SB 974 in order to:

Reduce the time it takes to bring housing units online from land use to planning to engineering to construction to move-in.

Reduce the prohibitive costs incurred by lengthy approval processes, which are then passed on to homeowners and renters.

Improve affordability as supply is available more quickly to meet demand.

Increase production in order to provide more homeownership and rental opportunities.

Eliminate barriers to development.

Draw down the housing deficit of hundreds of thousands of units.

We also explicitly support the -1 Amendment to the bill introduced by Senator Anderson, which would also require engineering processes to be completed within 120 days. Currently jurisdictions, including many in Central Oregon, have no clock to ensure timely processing of applications. Ensuring housing applications are moving with deliberate speed is critical to lowering building costs and increasing supply. We encourage the inclusion of this amendment in the final bill.

Thank you, again, for your leadership on this difficult challenge facing us all.

Signed,
Matt Kelly