



Feb. 25, 2025

Sen. Kanh Pham  
Senate Committee on Housing and Development  
Oregon Legislature  
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Vote “No” on SB 438, Houses for Resale on Working Land

Dear Chair Pham and members of the Committee,

Oregon Coast Alliance is an Oregon nonprofit corporation whose mission is protection of coastal natural resources and community livability.

SB 438 would allow an additional house on every rural property, including forest-zoned and agriculture-zoned lands. But this bill is unnecessary; people who need an extra house on rural property can submit an application for it through several different existing mechanisms. All this bill would do is fragment the farm and forest lands essential for growing crops and timber. On the coast, this bill if passed would simply contribute to the growing numbers of second homes, large mansions and short-term rentals already fragmenting working lands and rural communities in all the coastal counties.

This bill only requires the new house to be for a family member for the initial application – after that the owner may lease the house and (subsequently) sell it to any purchaser. The last thing the coast needs is a fast track to yet more short-term rentals, which do absolutely nothing towards lessening the housing crisis. And that is precisely what this bill would do.

It will certainly not assist farm and forest operations to have every landowner eligible to site a house on their own land; it will only drive up farming costs and contribute to traffic and conflict on resource-zoned lands. But most importantly, this bill is essentially a “bait and switch” proposal that looks like it is about family housing on farms, but is in fact a means of dramatically increasing housing speculation in rural areas.

Oregon’s housing needs will not be solved by ill-designed shotgun approaches like this one. Please vote NO on SB 438.

Sincerely,  
Cameron La Follette, Executive Director