



February 18, 2021

Senator Kayse Jama, Chair
Senate Committee on Housing and Development
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SB 458 – Amendments Needed

Dear Chair Jama and Members of the Committee:

The League of Oregon Cities (LOC) represents all 241 cities across Oregon, which continue to face escalating rates of homelessness and a shortage of affordable and available housing. In the 2021 Legislative Session, the LOC is advocating to increase critical state investments in housing and services programs across the housing spectrum. The League is also engaged this session as your committed partner in both crafting and implementing sound policies to reduce barriers to affordable housing development and help increase our state's supply of needed housing.

HB 2001 (2019) allowed the development of middle housing types in all single-family zones. The LOC was a committed member of the Rules Advisory Committee that defined these housing types and set the roadmap for cities to implement HB 2001. Those rules were recently adopted, and cities are now in the process of updating their local codes to implement HB 2001.

HB 2001 did not include provisions related to middle housing types for homeownership. The LOC supports the underlying intent of SB 458, which intends to provide a uniform, streamlined process for the review and approval of land divisions for middle housing types – but the bill as introduced, poses a number of implementation challenges for local government. Specifically, SB 458 lacks clear alignment with local processes for building permit approvals, land use approvals, and land divisions and cities need to ensure that each new lot can be served with necessary utilities and easements, and that the dwellings comply with building code requirements, especially along the new lot line.

The LOC has been working closely with Habitat for Humanity and the Homebuilders on amendments to HB 2283 in the House, and we appreciate their collaboration and commitment to ensuring that the bill can be implemented at the local level. If the committee wishes to support SB 458, we urge you to adopt similar amendments to ensure the bill can be implemented as intended.

Thank you for your consideration,
Ariel Nelson, League of Oregon Cities