

**From:** [Ron-Janet Bevirt](#)  
**To:** [HHS Exhibits](#); [Rep KenyGuyer](#); [Rep Noble](#); [Rep Sanchez](#); [Rep Helt](#); [Rep Meek](#); [Rep Mitchell](#); [Rep Schouten](#); [Rep Williams](#); [Rep Zika](#); [FenderSosa Amie](#); [Buell Adam](#)  
**Subject:** I oppose HB 2001  
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The defects with HB 2001 are many and I will repeat them, but first it is important to set a background context for the conversation. We live in the current economic time/framework. We are all aware that national economic policies have been and continue to be concentrating wealth in the hands of the top 1% of Americans, while increasing numbers of people are becoming homeless. Housing problems are most acute in cities, desirable due to job possibilities and other attractive features such as clean air, water, recreation, and so on. These cities, including many in Oregon, are experiencing escalating housing costs, both sales costs and rent prices. Wages have not increased at the same rate as living costs. New housing construction has not kept pace with housing demand. The rising costs and availability of entry level housing for purchase and rent has not kept pace with demand and rental prices continue rising. HB 2001 is one example of “flailing” at solutions for “affordable housing” with insufficient understanding of the topic.

Here in Eugene, I am an active participant in the examination of the problems attending affordable housing and finding potential solutions. We have learned that “affordable housing” is not being created by the housing marketplace. “Affordable housing” requires subsidies. Our municipal government, continually struggling over where and how to spend money, has fallen behind in providing subsidizes/solutions to getting “affordable housing” built on the scale needed. Special interests advocate for solutions that will financially benefit them. All the while, years pass and more and more people struggle to afford housing while the most vulnerable become homeless.

The supporters of up-zoning residential neighborhoods in order to increase density in the form of middle housing, exercise superficial thinking when they believe that destroying one, presently less-expensive house, and replacing it with two, three, or four housing units will result in an increase of affordable housing. All new construction results in more-expensively priced housing, because that is what the builder/developer needs to do to obtain his/her return on investment (ROI).

No one wants to work without getting paid. It is easy to see that expensive housing results when an existing residential unit is demolished and replaced by multiple new units by looking at what has happened in Seattle and Portland. Housing prices increase where increased density infill takes place. Undesirable negative externalities include loss of trees and vegetation, on-street parking/traffic congestion, infrastructure upgrading costs, increased noise, demolition pollution, and wasted resources, loss of solar access and privacy. We need to pay attention to the social and environmental costs of policy choices.

An additional factor for Oregon is urban growth boundaries. As land availability decreases within the UGB, increasing scarcity causes land prices to increase. Certainly, we want to work to avoid endlessly encouraging sprawl, but preserving UGBs does not win the battle among best versus least desirable social outcomes. While working within UGBs, the least expensive, fastest, most desirable way to work with all the trade-offs, such as existing street, water, sewer infrastructure and transportation is to build multi-unit apartment buildings (economy of scale) above presently one-story commercial buildings along transportation corridors. We urgently need thousands of units of genuinely “affordable housing”. We should encourage greater density in residential neighborhoods where appropriate, but imposing one-size-fits-all up-zoning is the least-desirable and most-foolish option.

HB 2001 violates state-wide Goal 1: for public involvement in local planning: citizens to be involved in all stages of the planning process.

HB 2001 undermines State-wide Goal 2: requiring comprehensive and coordinated planning.

HB 2001 eliminates single-family house neighborhoods.

HB 2001 mandates increased density without planning or funding for additional necessary services such as schools, roads, parks, sewers, and so on.

HB 2001 overrides important elements of local planning control. State government should not dictate where density should be increased. The local planning process needs to consider traffic, parking, transit, infrastructure, and environmental consequences.

HB 2001 seizes zoning control of local neighborhoods and violates everything we believe about democratic government. It is extremely arrogant for any group to presume that they “know best” and should be able to impose their beliefs on others.

The widespread demolition of existing affordable housing harms the environment and is tremendously wasteful. According to former PSU Professor Lutzenhiser, 11/16/16 statement to Portland City Council, “Our demolition and new construction carbon emissions estimate is in the neighborhood of 47,000 pounds of CO2 emitted in the demo-construction process. The estimate for a major energy retrofit of an existing house is about 1,500 lbs (about 1/30th as much), and building a new ADU is estimated to produce around 12,000 pounds of CO2.”

HB 2001 will increase housing prices.

The impact of HB 2001 would primarily be on the most-affordable, smaller, older houses presently owned or rented in neighborhoods serving workforce income folks. These least expensive and presently affordable to purchase houses would be the most vulnerable to being wrecked and replaced with some form of more-expensive middle housing.

HB 2001 mandates on-street parking. A four-plex might add eight cars to street parking.

A recent-year housing study from Multnomah county showed that 70% of people desire a single-family dwelling with a yard and off-street parking.

Most middle housing is studios and one or two bedroom units, which are too small for families with children. 70% of renters in Lane County are families with children with incomes below 80% of the area medium income (AMI). Most middle housing does not serve these folks.

There is no evidence that middle housing will be “affordable housing” for low income, workforce people.

There is no evidence that there is an unmet demand for middle housing.

HB 2001 arbitrarily negates the municipal residential zoning promise that existed when the property owner purchased the property zoned and located as it was on the street and in the neighborhood as it existed when purchased.

HB 2001 will turn residential neighborhoods into chaotic architectural hodge podges; destroying property values and neighborhood character in the process.

HB 2001 undermines infrastructure capacity planning for sewers, water, traffic, pedestrian, bicycle, storm water, and schools.

Both Eugene and the State of Oregon have implemented policies emphasizing the development of transit-oriented housing. That is more-dense housing along transit corridors. Increasing density scattered throughout residential neighborhoods away from transit corridors will increase transportation costs by aggravating vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

A new study shows that upzonings, like that proposed in HB2001, are ineffective in promoting either housing affordability or supply. The findings: “... **the short-term, local-level impacts of upzoning are higher property prices but no additional new housing construction.**” So not only does it worsen affordability, but it doesn’t increase housing supply in the near term.

[http://www.jchs.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/Harvard\\_JCHS\\_State\\_of\\_the\\_Nations\\_Housing\\_2018.pdf](http://www.jchs.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/Harvard_JCHS_State_of_the_Nations_Housing_2018.pdf)

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Please reject HB 2001.

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