

Dear Representatives,

Please vote against HB2001, a bill that disenfranchises Oregon's citizens through a heavy-handed imposition of a one-size-fits-all approach with no presented evidence of the purported benefits or likely impact.

The bill's sponsor [recently said](#) it should be “viewed as the ‘opening conversation’ about one way to address the state's worsening housing crisis.” A conversation that circumvents local community groups, local government, and local planning mechanisms – in order to impose a policy on 2.5 million people (62% of the state's population) in 55 cities – is not a conversation conducted in good faith. [Goal 1 of Oregon's Statewide Planning Goals & Guidelines](#) is citizen involvement. It is hard to see how, as the Guidelines state, a cross-section of affected citizens has been involved in all phases of the planning process. Indeed, there has been hardly any dialogue at all.

The bill's sponsor further stated, "We want to make sure that more communities have more types of housing." This assumes two things: first, that eliminating single-family zoning is the only or best way to produce different types of housing and second, that all else being equal, more types of housing would solve a housing crisis. As it stands, Portland doesn't have a housing shortage - it has an *affordable* housing shortage and the bill's sponsors have not provided data that show eliminating single-family zoning will in turn increase the stock of *affordable* housing and not, say, result in an increase of *un-affordable* housing. Comparisons to a similar measure in Minneapolis, for example, are inadequate because i) there has been no study of the impact in Minneapolis either before or after the bill's passage and ii) that example deals with a city council voting on its own zoning, not a state imposing zoning on many different cities.

This raises an important point about the interaction between state and local governments. While I note that Portland (pop. 630,331) has an affordable housing problem, I don't know the case for La Grande (pop. 12,999), or each of the other 53 cities on the list - do the state's legislators? Are they confident that eliminating single family zoning will have a net positive effect in all of the cities? Or is it more appropriate to have the people, planners, and officials of these cities themselves look at tailoring solutions to meet their own unique circumstances? In Portland there are plenty of areas where it makes sense to have the "missing middle" type of housing the bill's sponsors desire - but we figure that out through a deliberate planning process that takes into account the impact and involves the affected citizenry as part of the process. We may not always like the results - this is true from local to national government - but it at least aspires to be an informed democratic process. The State Planning Guidelines [make clear](#) “the state does not write comprehensive plans. It doesn't zone land or administer permits for local planning actions” because “local governments do the planning and administer most of the land-use regulations.”

One could claim we're in an education crisis since Oregon schools rank in the bottom 26%, but we would howl if the Trump Administration's Department of Education were to impose a one-size-fits-all educational policy on all of our schools. HB2001 is a

significant overreach by Salem and a repudiation of government partnership and dialogue with its citizens. Please reject this bill.

Sincerely,

Daniel Dieckhaus
NE Portland