

Coalition for Affordable and Safe Housing
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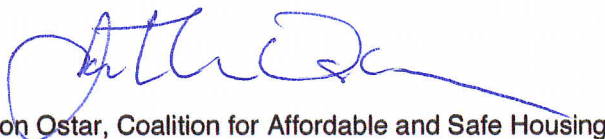
Members of the House Committee on General Government and Consumer Protection:

The Coalition for Affordable and Safe Housing supports a restoration of affordable housing tools to our local jurisdictions. In 1998, in response to the growing concern that demand would soon outpace supply, the Metro regional government began studying a range of policies and tools used around the country to generate affordable housing. One of the most effective tools studied was inclusionary zoning, which allows local jurisdictions to ensure that a certain percentage of new market rate housing units in developments of a certain size are reserved at a mix of income levels. Inclusionary zoning has been used since the early 1970s, first in Montgomery County, Maryland, and today with over 140 jurisdictions in California alone utilizing the tool, enabling local governments to customize affordable housing policies to their particular needs.

Yet in 1999, lobbyists representing private housing developers and other real estate interests persuaded the Oregon legislature to preempt the use of mandatory inclusionary zoning across the state. This statewide preemption has had devastating impacts for all Oregonians, particularly those that have been priced out of the escalating housing market. New development closely followed local transportation and urban renewal planning efforts, while federally subsidized affordable housing was pushed out to the fringes of local jurisdictions. By tying the hands of local jurisdictions to customize regulation of local housing markets, all Oregonians became subject to the whims of the boom-bust cycle, ensuring that fewer and fewer Oregonians could reach their dreams of affordable and accessible home possession and ownership. Worse, it has created a commodity in public health and opportunity: either you can afford to live in an area where there are opportunities for positive health impacts, or you cannot.

It is time for Oregon to restore the full range of tools to its local jurisdictions so we can collectively meet the housing challenges of the 21st Century. We need to be flexible and we need to have access to every tool available so we can work with developers and homebuilders to get the right mix of incomes needed to support whole, healthy and livable communities. It is past time we repeal this statewide prohibition on mandatory inclusionary zoning and stop handcuffing our local communities from serving all people, all residents, all Oregonians.

Support HB 3531 to repeal the statewide ban and restore inclusive housing tools to our local jurisdictions.



Jon Ostar, Coalition for Affordable and Safe Housing

Community Alliance of Tenants
NAYA Family Center
Upstream Public Health
Housing and Land Advocates
OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon

The Urban League of Portland
Latino Network
Coalition for a Livable Future
Center for Intercultural Organizing
Oregon Opportunity Network