



OREGON HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

March 4, 2024

Timothy G. Sekerak
Chief Clerk of the House
State Capitol Building
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Vote Explanation – SB 1537 B

Chief Clerk Sekerak,

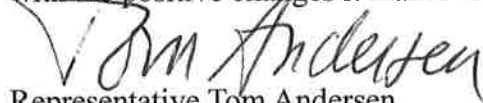
I voted in support of SB 1537 B because we are facing a housing crisis and must act. I greatly appreciate Governor Kotek's hard work on this bill and the housing crisis in our state. Housing affordability is a critical issue facing the City of Salem and Oregon as a whole. Importantly, SB 1537 B makes several good changes to last year's HB 3414, which I voted against.

First, SB 1537 B scales back the size of allowable Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) expansions from what was permitted in HB 3414. Expansions at cities' edges have significant environmental costs. To best address affordability concerns, instead of McMansions at the edges of cities, we need dense, missing middle housing close to where people shop, work, and go to school. Smaller acreage allowances will encourage development in urban cores but permit cities that need to expand their UGBs to do so.

Next, SB 1537 B also recognizes the importance of local control. As a former Salem City Councilor for eight years, I know that local governments are most familiar with their cities. HB 3414 would have given the Governor the authority to expand UGBs. However, in SB 1537 B, local control is given back to our cities, who will be best positioned to make the right decision for themselves.

Last, SB 1537 B requires that at least 30 percent of new housing be affordable. Housing is most households' largest expense, and many Oregonians are struggling with rising prices. As such, I am heartened to see this commitment to affordability. However, I must note that while housing is often a household's largest expense, transportation is often the next largest expense. The edges of cities have the least access to affordable public transportation. As we look to address all aspects of affordability, I look forward to continued discussions during the 2025 legislative session about expanded public transportation opportunities in Salem and across our state.

I am heartened by the commitment to housing expansion which is present in SB 1537 B along with the positive changes it makes to HB 3414.


Representative Tom Andersen

