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OFFICE OF REPRESENTATIVE LUCETTA ELMER

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Representative Elmer Leads Public Hearing for Her Priority “Housing Oregon’s Workforce” Legislation

SALEM, OR – Today, Representative Lucetta Elmer (R- McMinnville) presented one of her priority bills for the 2024 Legislative Session, “Housing Oregon’s Workforce” ([House Bill 4134](#)), in front of the House Committee on Housing and Homelessness. This bipartisan legislation, co-chief sponsored by Representative Gomberg (D-Otis), would provide funding to cities across the state that have land within their current urban growth boundaries to develop workforce affordable housing.

“The City of McMinnville approached me and expressed interest in drafting legislation to equip local governments with the tools needed to address the affordable workforce housing crisis many rural communities are facing,” **said Representative Elmer (R-McMinnville)**. “I hear so often that our teachers, firefighters, and nurses want to live where they work but with costs on the rise and a limited supply of affordable homes available for purchase, they can’t afford to.”

Currently, Oregon ranks 47th in the nation in housing production. If funded, the project would help develop over 1,000 new units of housing.

“There is going to be a trickle-down effect with House Bill 4134. This may begin with 1,000 units but there is an opportunity for many many more units to come from this,” **stated Jodi Hack, lobbyist for the Oregon Home Builders Association, during the hearing**. “There are multitudes of other subdivisions that are connected and tied to these that are also sitting and waiting in the pipeline for these pieces of infrastructure that small rural communities have not been able to bring forward.”

During the hearing, public testimony in support of the bill was also provided by: **Nicholas Snead** from the City of Madras, **Dave Hunnicutt** from the Oregon Property Owners Association, **Beth Caster** a local Yamhill County Realtor, and **Ariel Nelson** from the League of Oregon Cities.

McMinnville Mayor Remy Drabkin also spoke in support of the bill.

“One thing that happens for us in rural communities is we get wrapped up in Portland area MSA (Metropolitan Statistical Area). All of a sudden that skews what our affordability metrics look like – Keeping the policy intact with the funding is important,” **said Mayor Drabkin during the committee hearing.** “If this money were to flow through an agency, where we would have to apply for a grant or go through a process, we are not going to get the money in time to implement the infrastructure.”

Click [here](#) to watch the full public hearing.

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