

A Resolution in Support of Washington Senate Bill 5670 and House Bill 1782: Creating additional middle housing near transit and in areas traditionally dedicated to single-family detached housing.

WHEREAS, Washington Senate Bill 5670 and House Bill 1782 were introduced into the Washington State Legislature to combat homelessness and the worsening housing crisis around the state; and

WHEREAS, "Middle housing" is defined as duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, fiveplexes, sixplexes, stacked flats, townhouses, and courtyard apartments; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Governor Jay Inslee published a policy brief which stated, "Passing a new statewide policy to allow a variety of 'middle housing' types in our cities is one of the most impactful things we can do to restore housing supply and encourage affordable homeownership"¹; and

WHEREAS, between 2010 and 2019, Washington added jobs twice as fast than adding housing, re-legalizing middle housing will help alleviate the shortage of homes Washington faces²; and

WHEREAS, re-legalizing middle housing will help reduce prices³ which have risen due to the statewide housing shortage⁴; and

WHEREAS, re-legalizing middle housing will help correct racially exclusive housing bans and create more welcoming neighborhoods^{5 6 7}; and

WHEREAS, re-legalizing middle housing will reduce urban sprawl and result in numerous environmental and community benefits⁸; and

WHEREAS, re-legalizing middle housing will reduce overall infrastructure costs⁹; and

WHEREAS, re-legalizing middle housing will reduce polluted stormwater runoff¹⁰ and reduce deforestation caused by clearcutting acres of greenspace for new homes¹¹; and

¹ Combating Washington's Homelessness Crisis (2021), p. 5.

² Madeline Baron et al., "Housing Underproduction in Washington State" (Washington DC, Washington DC: Up For Growth, 2020).

³ Michael Andersen, "Portland's Fourplex Legalization Would Reduce..." Sightline Institute, October 1, 2020.

⁴ Dave Ross, "Economist: Lack of Affordable Homes in Puget Sound..." MyNorthwest.com, December 7, 2021.

⁵ Jonathan Rothwell et al., "The Effect of Density Zoning..." Urban Affairs Review 44, no. 6 (September 2009): pp. 779-806.

⁶ J. T. Rothwell, "Racial Enclaves and Density Zoning..." American Law and Economics Review 13, no. 1 (1, 2011): pp. 290-358.

⁷ Anthony Dedousis, "Single-Family Zoning and Exclusion in L.A. County: Part 2," City Observatory, May 27, 2021.

⁸ Melissa G. Kramer, "Our Built and Natural Environments..." § (2013).

⁹ Tanvi Misra, "How Much Sprawl Costs America," Bloomberg.com (Bloomberg, March 24, 2015).

¹⁰ "Stormwater," Washington State Department of Ecology, accessed January 16, 2022.

¹¹ Dan Bertolet, "No, Seattle's Growth Boom Is Not a Tree Apocalypse," Sightline Institute, September 11, 2018.

WHEREAS, middle housing is inherently more energy efficient and can cut a city block's carbon impact by 20 percent ¹²; and

WHEREAS, re-legalizing middle housing encourages neighborhoods to become less car-dependent, thus creating walkable communities which support local business and better transit ¹³; and

WHEREAS, re-legalizing middle housing would benefit local businesses such as local builders ¹⁴, create well-paying construction jobs, and increase local sales and property tax revenue ¹⁵; and

WHEREAS, Washington's housing crisis requires statewide solutions ¹⁶; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE 26TH LEGISLATIVE DEMOCRATS:

THAT, the members of this body support the Washington Senate Bill 5670 and House Bill 1782: Creating additional housing near transit and in areas traditionally dedicated to single-family detached housing; and

THAT, the members of this body encourage our elected officials to support, not only the aforementioned Senate and House Bills, but also support future measures to ease the cost of living burden placed on their constituents; and

THAT, upon passage, a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the elected officials who represent the 26th Legislative District.

TABLED: Feb. 3, 202

¹² Michael Andersen, "A Duplex, a Triplex and a Fourplex Can Cut a Block's Carbon Impact 20%," Sightline Institute, June 7, 2019.

¹³ Portland City Council, "The Portland Plan," The Portland Plan § (2012), p. 128.

¹⁴ Francesca Mari, "A \$60 Billion Housing Grab by Wall Street," The New York Times Magazine (The New York Times, March 4, 2020).

¹⁵ NAHB

¹⁶ Michael Andersen, "States Must Reform Zoning Because No City Can End a Shortage Alone," Sightline Institute, December 9, 2021.

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