

February 5, 2022

Dear Chair Ormsby and Members of the House Appropriations Committee,

We are writing on behalf of our 2,500 members to urge you to pass HB 1782 creating additional middle housing near transit and in areas traditionally dedicated to single-family detached housing. We support this legislation because Washington needs to allow and create additional housing to address the affordability crisis our state is facing.

We applaud that HB 1782 would apply rational standards to increasing density—growing density in cities and especially near transit stops with frequent service. Having statewide standards will help ensure that we don't continue to see BIPOC and low-income neighborhoods displaced while other neighborhoods remain unchanged enclaves for the wealthy.

More housing, everywhere, means housing gets cheaper and more people have financial access to purchasing a home. Increasing zoning options to allow more middle housing to be built in single family-zoned areas is a way to add housing without having to radically change the way a neighborhood looks and feels. Additional housing density and small zoning changes could have a transformational effect on the vibrancy of our neighborhoods.

We strongly urge you to vote this bill out of Committee before the fiscal cutoff. As this bill continues through the legislative process, we urge the Legislature to work with cities to agree on a bill that applies statewide standards to grow density. Thank you very much for your work on this issue, which is key for Washington's future.

Sincerely,

Rachel Smith
President & CEO
Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce

Please also see my recent op-ed about the importance of affordability and density in the Puget Sound Business Journal here: https://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/digital-edition?issue_id=18658&loc=pcmod on page 33.