



Oregon Law Center

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**Portland City Council
Testimony in Support of Item #901: Manufactured Dwelling Parks Zoning
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Mayor Wheeler and Commissioners:

My name is Becky Straus and I am a Staff Attorney with the Oregon Law Center (OLC). OLC is a non-profit law firm whose mission is to achieve justice for low-income communities of Oregon by providing a full range of the highest quality civil legal services. The vast majority of our clients have incomes at or below the federal poverty level, and are hard-working members of our community who struggle to provide the necessities for themselves and their families.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of the proposal to establish a new residential base zone for manufactured dwelling parks. The proposal may help to preserve affordable housing availability for approximately 3,000 families in Portland and could greatly benefit our clients.

Directly from the experience of our clients, our offices see the devastating impact of the ongoing housing crisis. It is increasingly difficult to find housing that is affordable and to maintain any type of stability of tenure in that housing. Manufactured dwelling parks (MDPs) are one of the few options for people to seek out both.

Though state law provides some legal protections to residents in MDPs, those protections typically do not prevent displacement of its residents when a park is closed and redeveloped. Such displacement can have devastating effects on park residents and their families as it uproots them from their neighborhoods, their schools, and their safe routes to work or school. Communities suffer because businesses lose their workforce, schools see the impact on their students, homelessness increases and communities of color, seniors and people with disabilities are displaced from the services and resources that help them to survive. We have ongoing concern about the ability of our clients to resettle after a MDP closure or redevelopment.

This proposal is an important piece of the larger effort to combat the housing crisis – an effort that includes advocacy for strengthening protections for tenants in residential housing and for increasing the supply and availability of affordable housing. The rezoning will promote stability in housing for thousands of Portland residents. We appreciate your attention to this important issue and thank you for the action you are taking to protect access to affordable, stable housing.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions that you may have.