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NEWS RELEASE

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LEADERS APPOINT LAND USE FAIRNESS COMMITTEE

LEGISLATURE HOPES TO GIVE INDIVIDUALS QUICK RELIEF

SALEM—Oregon Senate President Peter Courtney and House Speaker Jeff Merkley today appointed a Joint Special Committee on Land Use Fairness to address issues raised by Measure 37. Sen. Floyd Prozanski and Rep. Greg Macpherson will co-chair the committee.

Since its passage in 2004, more than 6,000 Measure 37 claims have been filed statewide. A recent surge in claims by large developers threatens to overrun smaller requests by individuals to build a home on land they purchased years ago. While Measure 37 proponents campaigned on the issue of fairness to individuals, current reality does not match that rhetoric.

“A lot of people—no matter whether they voted for or against Measure 37—are telling me it isn’t working the way they thought it would. We’ve got to make a run at the problem. We’ve got to fix it,” said President Courtney (D-Salem/Gervais/Woodburn).

Speaker Merkley (D-Portland) said, “Measure 37 now reverberates with the sound of industrial chainsaws and bulldozers. It bears no resemblance to the measure voters approved, so we have to do everything we can to make sure Oregonians are getting what they bargained for.”

In addition to being out of step with the will of the voters, large-scale claims from major developers will put a serious strain on infrastructure and natural resources relied upon by Oregon’s smaller communities. Similarly, the short 180-day approval period prevents a thorough case-by-case review and instead forces local governments to make snap decisions to comply with the law.

“I welcome entering into a joint committee to give relief more quickly to individual homeowners,” said Senator Prozanski (D-Lane and Douglas Counties). “Hopefully, this legislative process will help individuals who just want to build a home on their land.”

Representative Macpherson (D-Lake Oswego) said, “It is now clear that claims from huge developers are putting serious strains on local governments across the state. Cities and counties need some relief, and they need a consistent method for prioritizing and processing those claims.”

Members of the Joint Special Committee on Land Use Fairness are:

- Sen. Floyd Prozanski, co-chair
- Rep. Greg Macpherson, co-chair
- Sen. Larry George, vice chair
- Rep. Bill Garrard, vice chair
- Sen. Roger Beyer
- Sen. Betsy Johnson
- Sen. Kurt Schrader
- Rep. Brian Clem
- Rep. Arnie Roblan
- Rep. Patti Smith

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