



Attn: Oregon House Committee
Re: Informational Hearing on Building Energy Codes

Dear committee members,

We are a construction company that not only advocates, but oftentimes subsidizes the most idealistic building best practices. Having completed projects that meet and exceed some of the most rigorous standards that support homes built for net zero energy consumption, we have come to realize that the climate action goals of our state and country are achievable and exceedable in the near future. Our building codes need to reflect a commitment to environmental responsibility. The committed constituents of our state deserve to know that all upcoming construction will meet the standard for our future. Oregon used to set the standard for energy efficient building practice, and it's time we regain that status.

Our company built the first Oregon REACH code house easily without deviating from our normal construction practices, while still earning a profit. The point is: we can raise the bar for building standards, with minimal effect to the building industry. This industry can respond quickly to more rigorous practices that would yield more energy efficient buildings, while improving both quality and longevity of the projects.

Please prioritize building codes that require Oregon to meet its potential. We are state full of talented designers, builders, and conscientious people who need their services. There is no reason for us to look away from the low hanging fruit of energy efficient building. In my experience, minimal efforts have exponential gains in the construction industry, and many solutions would simply only require shifting away from bad habits and embracing new technology. Due to concentrated certification organizations' efforts such as the Living Future Institute, Earth Advantage, Passive House US, the USGBC, and the efforts of the DOE, the materials and equipment industry has heeded the call to support energy efficient construction. Now it's time for builders, designers, and our state code to push this momentum forward.

Our company will continue to provide a building service that fits our personal code of responsibility, but what about the other hundreds of thousand buildings to be built next year? Current code has been referred to as "the lowest quality that you are legally allowed to build to". Thinking of our code system in this way frightens me. We currently have access to the knowledge to dramatically update this minimum standard to something Oregon can be proud of.

What are we waiting for?

James Ray Arnold, President

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