

February 19, 2016

Paul Schwer, Nick Collins, Steve Turina, Dave Williams, Brad Wilson and Grant Parthemer
Testimony to the Oregon House Committee
Informational Hearing on Building Energy Codes
February 2016

Dear Committee Members,

We are writing to provide our perspective on how Oregon can effectively meet its climate responsibilities through the improvement of building energy codes. We are all experienced Professional Engineers and Principals at PAE Consulting Engineers. Our firm specializes in designing the mechanical and electrical systems for high performing buildings both in Oregon and throughout the western United States. Many of those designs provide performance that exceeds current codes by 25% to 65%. Our most efficient designs are now "Net Zero Energy" and they produce all the energy they need over the course of a year through on site renewable energy (PV Panels).

Oregon has been a leader in sustainable design nationally for almost two decades but unfortunately our energy codes have not kept up with that leadership. Here is what we see:

- Our energy code was once one of the best in the country. Now we have fallen behind Washington and California and are either just meeting or lagging behind federal model code standards.
- Oregon needs to return to its leadership role in meeting our climate responsibilities and to support Oregon's legislated climate change emission goals. State codes should incrementally decrease energy use in new buildings and homes by 65% over the next 15 years.
- Our most efficient designs are meeting the 65% energy improvement today (over 15 years before the codes would be fully implemented). If we can meet these goals now, it will only become easier for designers and contractors to meet them in the future as construction and design practices become even more efficient.
- It is our opinion that a stepped, 15-year ramp up period provides adequate time for the entire construction industry to meet the proposed 2032 standards.
- When setting energy improvement requirements, allowing for flexibility in how to achieve the energy targets will help the industry innovate and find the most cost-effective approach that meets overall goals.



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- There will likely be over 700,000 new homes and apartments built in Oregon between now and 2050 and over 800 million new square feet of commercial building space. If built to an increasing energy code that achieves 65% improvement by 2032, Oregonians in 2050 would save over \$1 billion per year in energy costs compared to current codes.
- Time is of the essence. Delaying the start of this code change process another 3 years would mean not impacting 3 years of prime construction activity.

We hope to see Oregon return to a leadership role in the development of our energy codes. It will benefit all Oregonians.

Sincerely,

Paul Schwer, PE
President

Nick Collins, PE
Principal

Steve Turina, PE
Principal

Dave Williams, PE
Principal

Brad Wilson, PE
Principal

Grant Parthemer, PE
Principal