



## Bureau of Planning and Sustainability

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March 20, 2017

House Committee on Energy and Environment  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court Street NE, Room 347  
Salem, OR 97301

### City of Portland support for HB 2710

Dear Chair Helm and Members of the Committee:

The City of Portland strongly supports **HB 2710 with the -2 amendments**, which will take essential steps forward to improve Oregon's building code and ensure access to electric vehicle charging. Practical energy policies like these are critical not only to reducing energy and transportation costs for Oregon residents and businesses, but also to creating jobs in Oregon. In the Portland region alone, firms providing low-carbon and environmental goods and services employ 50,000 Oregonians.

These policies also take responsible, measured action to respond to the urgent threat of climate change. Like more than a dozen other Oregon cities and counties, Portland is working to reduce carbon pollution both in its own operations and through communitywide policies and programs. In Portland and Multnomah County, which have had a joint Climate Action Plan since 2001, the energy supplied to buildings accounts for more than 40 percent of local carbon pollution and the transportation sector nearly 40 percent. This bill makes a key contribution to addressing both of these sectors.

For buildings, Oregon's statewide building code pioneered energy efficiency specifications for decades, making Oregon a national leader and saving residents and businesses hundreds of millions of dollars. Oregon's code has not been improved since 2009, however, and we now lag well behind Washington and California, which are taking advantage of the advances in building technologies and products. With Oregon adding housing and commercial buildings to accommodate our rapid growth, it is essential that the building code ensure better energy performance in these buildings.

It is also important to provide certainty to the development community about the direction and pace of improvements to the building code, and this bill establishes a clear level of performance to be achieved over the next 15 years. This clarity provides architects and builders a predictable cycle for improving the efficiency of buildings and allows the industry to develop the most cost-effective ways to meet the energy targets.



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Buildings constructed today will stand for decades, and the way they are built strongly impacts how much energy they use year after year. Constructing efficient buildings to start with—rather than retrofitting them later—is a vastly more cost-effective way to keep utility bills low for households and commercial buildings.

For transportation, Portland welcomes the amendment to ensure that new buildings include conduit and electrical capacity to allow lower-cost installation of electric vehicle chargers as the EV market matures. The need to incorporate EV-readiness is especially acute for multifamily properties: research shows that most EV owners charge their vehicles at home, but tenants rarely have access to EV charging and will continue to have limited access until apartment buildings provide charging. As the costs of EVs continue to fall and EVs enter the second-hand car market, EVs offer the potential for a low-cost transportation solution for many households, and we must ensure that access to EV charging is available to renters as well as to homeowners.

Both the transportation and energy efficiency components of HB 2710 will save Oregonians money, reduce carbon emissions and help Oregon architecture and development firms maintain their ability to compete well globally because of the expertise they develop in constructing buildings here in Oregon. Oregon's building code should reflect the technologies that we need over the lifetime of the buildings, and that includes strong energy performance and electric vehicle charging.

The City of Portland strongly endorses HB 2710 with the -2 amendments and urges your support.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.



Susan Anderson  
Director

