

Advocates for the West  
Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians  
AirWorks, Inc.  
Alaska Housing Finance Corporation  
Alliance to Save Energy  
Allumia  
Alternative Energy Resources Organization  
American Rivers  
A World Institute for a Sustainable Humanity  
Beneficial State Bank  
BlueGreen Alliance  
Bonneville Environmental Foundation  
Centerstone  
Citizens' Utility Board of Oregon  
City of Ashland  
City of Seattle Office of Sustainability & Environment  
Climate Solutions  
Community Action Center of Whitman County  
Community Action Partnership Assoc. of Idaho  
Community Action Partnership of Oregon  
Drive Oregon  
Earth and Spirit Council  
Earth Ministry  
Ecova  
eFormative Options  
Emerald People's Utility District  
Energy Savvy  
Energy Trust of Oregon  
Environment Oregon  
Environment Washington  
HEAT Oregon  
Home Performance Guild of Oregon  
Home Performance Washington  
Housing and Comm. Services Agency of Lane Co.  
Human Resources Council, District XI  
Idaho Clean Energy Association  
Idaho Conservation League  
Idaho Rivers United  
Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns  
League of Women Voters Idaho  
League of Women Voters Oregon  
League of Women Voters Washington  
Montana Audubon  
Montana Environmental Information Center  
Montana Renewable Energy Association  
Montana River Action  
National Center for Appropriate Technology  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
New Buildings Institute  
Northern Plains Resource Council  
Northwest Energy Efficiency Council  
NW Natural  
NW SEED  
OneEnergy Renewables  
Opower  
Opportunities Industrialization Center of WA  
Opportunity Council  
Oregon Energy Coordinators Association  
Oregon Environmental Council  
Oregonians for Renewable Energy Policy  
OSEIA  
Pacific Energy Innovation Association  
Pacific NW Regional Council of Carpenters  
Portland Energy Conservation Inc.  
Portland General Electric  
Puget Sound Advocates for Retired Action  
Puget Sound Cooperative Credit Union  
Puget Sound Energy  
Renewable Northwest  
Save Our wild Salmon  
Sea Breeze Power Corp.  
Seattle Audubon Society  
Seattle City Light  
Seinergy  
Sierra Club  
Sierra Club, Idaho Chapter  
Sierra Club, Montana Chapter  
Sierra Club, Washington Chapter  
Small Business Utility Advocates  
Smart Grid Northwest  
Snake River Alliance  
Solar Installers of Washington  
Solar Oregon  
Solar Washington  
South Central Community Action Partnership  
Southeast Idaho Community Action Partners  
Spokane Neighborhood Action Partners  
Sustainable Connections  
The Climate Trust  
The Energy Project  
UCONS, LLC  
Union Of Concerned Scientists  
United Steelworkers of America, District 12  
US Green Building Council, Idaho Chapter  
Washington Environmental Council  
Washington Local Energy Alliance  
Washington State Department of Commerce  
Washington State University Energy Program  
YMCA Earth Service Corps



March 20, 2017

Chair Helm and Members of the House Committee on Energy &  
Environment  
Oregon State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 2710

Dear Chair Helm and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the NW Energy Coalition, I am writing to express our strong support for HB 2710 as a way to save utility customers money on their bills, improve indoor air quality in homes and workplaces throughout the state, and achieve significant greenhouse gas reductions.

The NW Energy Coalition is an alliance of about 100 environmental, civic and human service organizations, progressive utilities and businesses in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana and British Columbia. We promote development of renewable energy and energy conservation, consumer protection, low-income energy assistance, and fish and wildlife restoration on the Columbia and Snake rivers.

Until recently, Oregon was a leader in developing state energy codes that used beneficial, cost-effective methods to achieve energy efficient buildings. Currently, however, we are falling behind many states in this area. Washington and California are already on a path to achieve net zero energy use over the next 15 years. Not only are Oregon's energy codes failing to keep up with our neighbors, but we are also falling behind federal standards.

HB 2710 will set us back on the right path. The bill calls for the Department of Consumer and Business Services to develop and adopt energy codes that ensure energy use reductions in newly constructed buildings in order to meet a goal of 65% energy use reduction by 2032. The state administration must report to the legislature every three years on progress towards the target. The bill sets a clear goal for energy use reductions, but is not prescriptive in its approach. It maintains the existing process for energy code updates, allowing advisory boards and stakeholders to determine specific code updates and the amount of energy use reduction in each code cycle.

This energy use reduction may sound like an aggressive goal, but it is entirely doable with existing technology – Washington and California are already well on their way. In order to meet the goal in the most cost effective manner, energy codes should be improved incrementally and consistently by stepping up energy performance requirements every three years. This will provide the market with clear forecasts of upcoming code changes and the time to adjust design and construction practices. Done right, this can be done with minimal increase in construction costs with tremendous long-term financial savings. The incremental code improvements will represent net economic benefit to Oregonians at every 3-year step as operational savings outweigh the financed cost of construction.

The bill also assures that all new houses and twenty percent of parking spaces for commercial and multi-family developments will be ready to charge electric vehicles. This will make it easier for homeowners and renters to consider electric vehicle ownership, another transition that will save Oregonian's money and reduce greenhouse gas emissions at the same time.

By gradually increasing requirements for energy efficiency and readiness for on-site solar, Oregonian's will reap tremendous benefits – a report by Earth Advantage indicates that residents and businesses will save over \$1 billion dollars per year on utility bills by 2050.

Ensuring that the energy savings is achieved up front, during construction, is the least cost way to achieve efficiency and solar readiness. In fact, cost curves for greenhouse gas reductions typically show that energy efficiency in new construction is one of the least cost ways to reduce our carbon footprint – typically showing *negative costs* that represent the benefits of energy bill savings to consumers. Passage of this bill would result in 6.3 million metric tons of carbon pollution reductions by 2050, according to analysis by New Buildings Institute and Earth Advantage. This savings is an essential component of meeting Oregon's greenhouse gas reduction goals.

The building community in Oregon is well equipped to easily achieve the goals set forth in HB2710. We are nationally known as leaders in clean energy; particularly for our leadership on energy efficiency. In fact, within Energy Trust territory about 40 percent of new homes were built above code in the past year and they averaged 20 percent savings above code. Please help ensure the benefits of constructing new buildings efficiently to residents and businesses across the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on HB 2710. We urge you to vote in favor of this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wendy Gerlitz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "W" and a stylized "G".

Wendy Gerlitz  
Policy Director