

March 20th, 2017

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

Multnomah County Support for HB 2710

Chair Helm and Members of the Committee:

Multnomah County asks for your strong support of HB 2710, a prudent, cost effective approach to increasing building energy efficiency in the state that is a win for both consumers and the environment. In addition, Multnomah County supports the -2 Amendment that ensures that the buildings we build are supporting the transformation of our transportation sector to clean, low carbon electric vehicles.

Once a leader on building codes, Oregon has fallen behind Washington, California, and other states in its energy efficiency standards for new buildings. Relying on compliance with federal building code changes to guide Oregon's own standards ignores the strength and innovation of Oregon's design and construction community. Buildings in Multnomah County are being constructed today, cost-effectively, that meet HB 2710's energy performance requirements for the year 2033. Every project that moves forward at a lesser standard is locking in missed energy savings over the life of that building.

Multnomah County adopted an updated Climate Action Plan in 2015, reaffirming its commitment to reducing community-wide GHG emissions 40% below 1990 levels by 2030, and 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. In Multnomah County, 44% of greenhouse gas emissions come from residential and commercial buildings. In Oregon local governments are preempted from adopting building codes that conflict with the state code, so our Climate Action Plan focuses on strengthening statewide building codes as a key strategy for achieving our local GHG emissions goals. HB 2710 does that.

While HB 2710 focuses on improving energy standards for buildings, Multnomah County encourages the Committee to also recognize the link between designing buildings for energy efficiency and improving occupant well being and productivity. About 1 in 10 Oregon adults has asthma, which can be triggered by poor indoor air quality, with African Americans facing the highest prevalence of asthma in the state. In addition, labor costs are typically the largest cost driver for any organization. HB 2710 supports well-built, high efficiency buildings that can also

improve indoor air quality, reducing asthma in homes and increasingly productivity in workplaces.

HB 2710 sets a clear path for strengthening building energy efficiency standards predictably over time and providing regulatory certainty for builders. Improving building performance through a strengthened building code will ensure that all Oregonians are able to benefit from improved indoor air quality and lower utility bills, including low income households who would benefit the most.

Sincerely,



Tim Lynch
Multnomah County Office of Sustainability