



February 14, 2018

Oregon Progressive Party

Position on Bill at 2018

Session of Oregon Legislature:

HB 4121: Support bill, suggest reserving more funds for dwellings owned or occupied by low-income families and limiting rent increases

Dear Committee:

The Oregon Progressive Party supports on this bill, which:

- Requires Housing and Community Services Department to establish and administer a program to provide incentive payments, funding, and grants for certain energy improvement projects.
- Provides incentive payments to construction contractors for energy improvement projects.
- Requires department to determine incentive payment for energy improvement projects, establish payment rate schedules.
- Requires department to allocate at least 25 percent of program funding for energy efficiency and affordable housing, with up to 90 percent of the amount allocated to affordable housing, and not less than 10 percent for grants to replace or extend the life of a manufactured dwelling or improve water or sewer systems serving manufactured dwellings owned and occupied by low or very low income persons.

Significant action is needed to reduce energy use and its accompanying effect on climate. \$18 million for that purpose would appear to be a small down payment on the effort actually needed.

We agree with Tax Fairness Oregon that a greater portion of the funds should be reserved for improving dwellings occupied by low-income families. Since Oregon has no rent control, however, providing funds to the owners of rental housing may result in rent increases, as treated dwellings become more desirable. The bill has no provision for conditioning the participation of landlords on not raising rents after the energy conservation or solar treatments. Such a provision should be added.

Oregon Progressive Party

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