

Testimony on HB 3227
Natural Resources Defense Council
Oregon House of Representative
Housing Committee
April 8, 2021

Good morning Chair Fahey and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of HB 3227. For the record, my name is Christina Theodoridi. I'm a technical analyst for the Natural Resources Defense Council. NRDC is a national environmental advocacy organization with over three decades of experience working on technology transitions in the air-conditioning and refrigeration sectors.

This is an opportunity for Oregon to clear one of the main hurdles that the transition to better, climate-friendlier refrigerants faces. The refrigerants we use today are deleterious to the climate. They have a global warming potential thousands of times that of carbon dioxide. Better, climate-friendlier alternatives exist today for most applications like air-conditioning and refrigeration.

The bill as amended will allow the use of the climate-friendlier refrigerants that have been approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

EPA maintains a list of acceptable refrigerants under its Significant New Alternatives Policy program (or SNAP for short). They approve alternative refrigerants based on a comparative risk analysis of the health, environmental and cost impacts of each chemical.

This bill will ensure that the refrigerants already vetted through EPA's SNAP program can be used in the state.

Under federal law, the HFC refrigerants used today will be phased down over the next 15 years. The transition to next-generation refrigerants will avoid significant GHG emissions. In fact, the phasedown is expected to immensely shrink annual U.S. emissions over the next 15 years. Through the phasedown the US will avoid more GHG emissions than the total annual emissions of Germany. HB 3227 will prepare Oregon for the nationwide phasedown by unlocking the market penetration of the better alternatives which in turn will reduce the state's reliance on HFCs.

This last part is incredibly important and timely because as the phasedown progresses, the better equipped a state is to transition away from HFCs, the smoother this transition will be as the supply of the currently used refrigerants is phased down. All states will need to adopt code modifications like the ones proposed here. Two states, Washington and Florida, have already successfully done so.

We urge you to support this bill as it provides an important technical modification to the codes that will enable the transition to climate-friendlier refrigerants and ensure that the state is ready to comply with the federal phasedown.

We look forward to working with the committee and the other stakeholders.

Thank you.

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