



The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 101-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

February 11, 2021

To: House Committee on Housing
<https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2021R1/Testimony/HHOUS>
Representative Julie Fahey, Chair

Re: **HB 2842** – Healthy Homes – **Support**

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports efforts to secure equal rights and equal opportunity for all and promote social and economic justice and the health and safety of all Americans. In particular, we support programs that help low-income and at-risk people move toward financial stability.

We strongly support [HB 2842](#) because it would provide financial support for broad measures to reduce housing-related health risks for Oregonians who can least afford to repair and rehabilitate their residences, for those in lower-income households and environmental justice communities.

We appreciate the bill’s focus on remediation to improve indoor air quality, in addition to energy efficiency measures. Air quality and moderate temperature inside a home are critical to family health and to reduce medical costs. For those susceptible to asthma, exposure to allergens (mold, dander, aerosolized animal feces) result in repeated emergency room visits and chronic use of medication. Exposure to smoke particulates also sends those with underlying pulmonary conditions to the emergency room.

Climate change promises extremes of all weather events, particularly heat. Extremes of temperature have the most impact on babies and older adults. Extreme heat is particularly dangerous to the elderly, many of whom have underlying medical conditions. Home energy efficiency reduces these risks, while lowering energy bills.

Please consider the following suggestions for improving HB 2842.

- While we recognize the importance of including rental property in the program, we recommend that you insert language to guard against landlords using the grant money to improve their rental property so as to raise rents, making it unaffordable to their low-income tenants.
- Consider adding to the interagency task force a representative from the energy-burdened target population.

We applaud the bill’s goals and its attention to ongoing implementation, measurement, and monitoring. HB 2842 will improve family health, help family budgets, and reduce emergency medical visits and overall energy use. “Healthy, wealthy and wise.” We can’t do much better than that.

We urge your Support for HB 2842.

Rebecca Gladstone
LWVOR President

Claudia Keith, Julie Chapman
LWVOR Climate Emergency Portfolio