



February 7, 2022

Oregon Senate  
Salem, Oregon 97301  
Senate Committee on Energy and Environment

Dear Chair Kate Lieber, Vice-Chair Findley, and Members Dembrow, Spence, Robinson:

**Oregon National Organization for Women (Oregon NOW)** is submitting this letter in support of SB1518, the "Reach code" bill moving forward in the Oregon Legislature in the best interests of women in Oregon and globally. Climate change is a planetary phenomenon that will impact all countries, but its effects are being shaped by pervasive and entrenched inequality. Heat waves, droughts, rising sea levels, and extreme storms [disproportionately affect women](#). That's because women are more likely [to live in poverty than men](#), have [less access to basic human rights](#) like the ability to freely move and acquire land, and [face systematic violence](#) that escalates during periods of instability. (Links from 3/2020 Global Citizen article [here](#).)

The climate crisis is worsening, and Oregonians are already experiencing many of its negative effects, including more frequent and destructive ice storms, droughts, and worsening air pollution levels. Current state law is holding communities back from enacting a more robust energy efficiency standard for new homes and buildings. Cities across the state like Bend, Hood River and Beaverton are growing rapidly, and buildings constructed now will be here for the next 50+ years. SB 1518 would allow cities to adopt stronger building codes for more energy efficient buildings. This would not only help lower our climate pollution; it would also lead to healthier air in our homes, and lower energy bills. With extreme wildfires, drought, and deadly heat waves becoming the new normal, we can't let another year go by without taking action!

Communities and advocates are asking for the choice of a stronger building code for energy efficiency now. Additionally, pollution released from the built environment is Oregon's second-largest source of climate-harming greenhouse gasses. Please support cities, towns, and counties that want to choose to build smart from the start.

We are already two years into the most consequential decade for climate action, leaving a small window of time to act. We cannot afford for our state to take a year off of making additional climate progress. The climate crisis doesn't take a year off and neither can the Legislature. Prioritize climate action this year by voting YES on Senate Bill 1518!

Thank you!

Respectfully,

Christine Chin Ryan  
President, Oregon NOW

Kim Critelli  
Legislative Co-Chair, Oregon NOW

Nancy Cook  
Legislative Co-Chair, Oregon NOW