



February 8, 2022

RE: Opposition to SB 1518

Chair Lieber and members of the Senate Energy & Environment Committee -

UA Local 290 Plumbers & Steamfitters represents over 4,800 journey workers, over 600 apprentices, and has 7 training centers across Oregon. Our members perform the safe, high quality construction work in the state that Oregonians enjoy. We are strongly opposed to Senate Bill 1518 which will break the uniform code system in Oregon and harm our industry.

At the foundation of much of the work we do in Oregon are the state uniform base codes. The unified code system has allowed Oregon to set high and energy efficient construction standards that benefit consumers, labor, contractors, and developers, and have set us up as leaders nationally for energy efficient codes. As a state, we improve on national codes to ensure the highest quality construction and efficiency in Oregon.

Senate Bill 1518 will undo a half century of good work and create confusion and inefficiency in the codes system. By allowing municipalities to adopt their own version of the building codes there will be confusion over enforcement and inspection of codes, confusion for workforce and contractors in the industry, cost increases for compliance, and inequity between jurisdictions. And it will increase our costs of training – which neither the state nor local governments pay for. It is additionally unclear how this could impact our licensing standards and applicability to a variety of new codes and the appeals process when there is a dispute.

We see broad opposition to Senate Bill 1518 from many partners in many sectors of our industry and those who use our services. We are committed to continued improvements to energy efficiency in construction and in the statewide building codes. However, to craft policy that does not undermine the current system, and achieves real, wholistic improvements, industry experts must be at the table.

We strongly urge your no vote on Senate Bill 1518, and ask that we look to find real, broad solutions to improving energy efficiency without damaging Oregon's construction industry and our high standards.

Sincerely,

Lou Christian, Business Manager
UA Plumbers and Steamfitters Local #290