



March 16th, 2023

Senator Sollman, Chair
Senate Committee on Energy & Environment
Oregon Legislature

Re: Environment Oregon supports Senate Bill 868, Senate Bill 869, Senate Bill 870 and Senate Bill 871

Chair Sollman, Vice-Chair Findley, and Members of the Committee,

Environment Oregon is a statewide, member-based environmental advocacy organization working for clean air, clean water, open space and a liveable climate, representing tens of thousands of members across Oregon. We are writing in support of the Resilient, Efficient Buildings package (Senate Bills 868-871) as critical ways for us to reduce climate pollution and improve the quality of life of Oregonians.

We have the ability to power our society with 100% renewable energy from the sun, the wind and the warmth of the Earth. One step to realizing that vision is making sure our homes, workplaces and other buildings are ready to use the renewable energy we harness.

At a time when renewable energy sources are more widely available and more affordable than ever, and as our state is working towards the goal of 100% clean electricity by 2040, making sure our buildings can run on electricity created from the power of the sun and the wind is the next phase of Oregon's clean energy journey.

Switching to clean, efficient and electric technologies like heat pumps for space and water heating can lead to less indoor and outdoor air pollution which means cleaner air for us to breathe. It also means less water pollution, reduced energy waste which can lead to more affordable utility bills, and greener communities overall.

The Resilient, Efficient Buildings policy package will put Oregon on a path to make this vision a reality.

- **Healthy Heating and Cooling for All** (Senate Bill 868) would accelerate heat pump deployment and support energy efficiency programs focused on weatherization and efficiency retrofits;
- **Build Smart from the Start** (Senate Bill 869) would update Oregon's base building code so all new buildings are built to be more energy efficient from the start;
- **Building Performance Standards** (Senate Bill 870) would require large, energy-intensive commercial buildings to adopt a building performance standard to improve efficiency;
- **Smart State Buildings** (Senate Bill 871) would make it easier for state owned public buildings to be made more energy efficient.

This is a well thought-through package of bills that takes advantage of the cleanest, most affordable form of energy we have: the energy we never use in the first place.

Oregon's not going alone. The federal government has made a down payment on helping Oregon's homes run on clean energy last summer with the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act. Thanks to the tax credits in the IRA, any homeowner, business, community organization, school or local government that installs an efficient heat pump between now and 2032, are eligible for a federal tax credit that will cover 30% up to \$2,000 annually of the system cost and installation. The IRA also directed millions of dollars to state energy offices to administer rebates for heat pump HVAC systems, heat pump water heaters, electric stoves, heat pump clothes dryers, new breaker boxes and related wiring and weatherization upgrades.

The Resilient, Efficient Buildings policy package will help position Oregon to take the most advantage of the opportunities provided through the Inflation Reduction Act, and help us get closer to our climate pollution reduction goals.

We urge the passage of Senate Bills 868, 869, 870 and 871 to build a cleaner, greener future for all Oregonians.

Sincerely,

Celeste Meiffren-Swango
State Director