



March 16, 2023

Oregon State Legislature
Senate Committee on Energy and Environment
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SB 870 - Relating to Resilient Efficient Buildings

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

On behalf of the Oregon Chapter Sierra Club and its 74,000 members and supporters, we are writing in support of SB 870 in the Resilient, Efficient Buildings Policy Package.

Senate Bill 870 will improve the energy efficiency of large, energy-intensive commercial buildings through the adoption of the Building Performance Standard. This bill along with the others in the Resilient, Efficient Buildings Policy Package, are climate-smart. Every day we are reminded of the fact that our world is changing due to the amount of carbon we are releasing into the atmosphere. The fact that buildings are among the largest sources of climate pollution in Oregon means that buildings can also be one of our climate solutions; therefore we need legislation like SB 870 to transition us away from fossil fuels used to heat and power to clean electric alternatives.

Buildings provide an important defense against extreme heat and wildfire smoke. They limit wildfire smoke and other outdoor air pollution from coming in, while helping regulate indoor temperatures. This legislative package will help remove barriers preventing Oregonians from making important updates to their homes needed to make them safer and healthier—such as more insulation, sturdier windows and doors—and transitioning to clean electricity for heating and cooking. It is important that Oregon's homes and buildings are more resilient to protect us from current and future climate harms.

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In addition, buildings are key to ensuring energy affordability by helping families save money on utility bills. More efficient, all-electric homes and buildings can reduce both construction and operation costs. And the transition to clean, efficient buildings will support local, family-wage jobs and provide the opportunity to grow Oregon's existing clean energy economy.

Finally, it is important to note a growing body of evidence clearly shows that the use of gas in homes and buildings is having significant beneficial impacts on indoor and outdoor air quality, and in turn, on public health and safety. A recent study found that almost 13% of childhood asthma nationwide is attributable to exposure to gas stoves, so it is critical that we pass policies like those in the Resilient, Efficient Buildings package to transition our homes and buildings away from polluting gas and adopt clean, electric alternatives.

We urge you to support Senate Bill 870 in the Resilient, Efficient Buildings Policy Package.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Dix, Chair
Legislative Committee
Oregon Chapter Sierra Club