

Submitter: Laurie Dougherty

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment

Measure: SB870

Chair Sollman, Vice-Chair Findley, and members of the Committee, my name is Laurie Dougherty. I live in Salem. I appreciate the work of the Joint Task Force on Resilient and Efficient Buildings and support the bills that resulted from the Task Force. SB 868, SB 869 SB 870, SB 871.

A few years ago when I was looking for a new apartment, I had a strong preference for electric heat and appliances. I did not want either the greenhouse gas emissions or the toxic effect on indoor air from natural gas. I was fortunate to find an all-electric apartment that met my other needs as well. However, the landlord provides hot and cold water to the whole building using centrally located natural gas-fired water heaters and often there is a smell of gas from them.

For the sake of the climate and for safer, healthier homes Oregon needs to ramp up efforts for energy efficiency and a transition to electric heating, cooling and appliances. Heat pumps are highly efficient and as the electric grid in Oregon becomes less dependent on fossil fuels, electric homes will become more climate friendly.

As a retired person with Social Security and a small pension, I know the importance of affordability and appreciate that SB 868 includes incentives and assistance for home improvements that will lower energy costs while making homes safer, healthier, and more comfortable.

Given the long life of buildings and the needs for housing, schools, health care facilities and the like for a growing population, it is imperative to “build smart from the start.” Oregon’s building codes and performance standards must be aligned with the state’s greenhouse gas reduction goals and enable the construction of energy efficient new buildings fit for conditions of the 21st century. This is particularly important for the largest buildings which contribute the most to climate- changing greenhouse gas emissions. State buildings ought to set a good example for greater energy efficiency while achieving cost savings from efficiency over time.

I urge you to support SB 868, SB 869 SB 870, SB 871. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.