

Chair Sollman, Vice-Chair Findley, and members of the committee,

I write in support of SB 870-1 to ensure that large commercial buildings in Oregon are updated over time to meet maximum efficiency of energy use and are more resilient to climate impacts. As a grandfather, I strongly favor legislation that will help improve the conditions of life for my descendants and reverse some of the damage done by our high-emissions culture during my lifetime.

Buildings account for a large portion (35%) of Oregon's climate-destroying emissions. We can reduce these emissions by making judicious changes to our Building Performance Standards and by aligning with the best of national standards for wise construction. We all know that it is imperative that we rapidly get our greenhouse emissions under control. Since buildings are used for decades, getting the best standards in place now is essential. Focusing on large buildings means that incremental emissions reductions will have the most beneficial effect.

This bill will direct the Department of Consumer and Business Services to set standards that reduce emissions and improve energy efficiency, in line with the American National Standards Institutes's standards for Energy Efficiency in Existing Buildings. This will encourage creation of locally-based jobs with good wages, thereby stimulating the economy. These rules will provide reliable and long-term certainty for businesses planning upgrades to their facilities. Those businesses will receive technical assistance in planning improvements to their physical plant.

This bill is a result of the Resilient Efficient Buildings Task Force created in 2022 by Senate Bill 1518. It makes sense from a business standpoint by reducing energy costs, it will help clean up air pollution, it will make buildings safer for workers, and it will help the state meet its climate goals. Much work has gone into preparing for this moment. Let's get it done!

I urge your vote for this crucial bill.

Sincerely,

Joseph Stenger MD
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