

Submitter: Nick Keenan

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment

Measure: SB871

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

My name is Nick Keenan, of Hillsboro, and a volunteer coordinator with the Climate Reality Project.

I support SB 868, SB 869, SB 870 and SB 871 because they represent a key opportunity for our state to build affordable, resilient, healthy, and more sustainable homes and buildings that we will be using for decades. We have an urgent need to build more affordable housing, while at the same time in all our communities low-income Oregonians are bearing the brunt of increasingly frequent dangerous weather and higher and more volatile energy costs. We must be strategic about how and what we build in this moment.

After the 2020 Wildfires, and luckily just before the June 2021 heat dome event, we installed a heat pump in our home. We were lucky enough to have the means to afford that device and we were alarmed to see our childrens' elementary school friends and their families not all be able to easily cope with the extreme heat. Some had to leave their homes – their shelter – to make it through those days – our friends in Talent were not so lucky. It's clear from the science and now our own experience these events will be more frequent, if not annual, in our region.

We know we have to adapt to this new reality. Being raised in a family of general contractors, I applaud the process that the Resilient Energy Efficient Building (REBuilding) Task Force went through to navigate the many intertwined issues of safety, climate science, health impacts, building codes and current regulation to land on these four workable proposals to address these new challenges. Buildings represent the 2nd largest source of emissions in Oregon, and according to ODOE's TIGHGER climate modeling, these policies represent the easiest 'must do' actions to achieve Oregon's climate goals on time, and households and developers need clear leadership and incentives from state policy to be able to make this transition - that they want to make. We need to provide more affordable and resilient housing to Oregonians now, or we will be rebuilding and retrofitting to catch up with the changing and intensifying climate before we know it.

We have an opportunity with this legislation to make our built world better for our kids now, and in the future. Please vote 'Yes' for these four bills.

Thank you so much for your time and your work for all Oregonians.