

Submitter: Mark Meininger

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Measure: HB2990

Dear Chair Marsh, Co-Vice-Chairs Levy and Levy, and Members of the House Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment,

I write in support of HB 2990.

I am a volunteer with the Portland Neighborhood Emergency Team (NET) program. My NET volunteering includes work in extreme weather shelters, which started for me at the Oregon Convention Center during the 2021 heat dome emergency. Since then I have volunteered as Person in Charge (PIC) at warming and cooling shelters operated jointly by Multnomah County and Portland at the Portland Building, the Salvation Army (Williams Street), Charles Jordan Community Center, and Imago Dei Church. I have also worked with my NET colleagues in my Sabin neighborhood to organize nearby neighbors to help each other in adverse circumstances. I understand the critical importance of resilience hubs and resilience networks.

The shelter facilities I have worked in and the organizing of nearby neighbors with my Sabin NET colleagues have also made clear to me that resilience hubs and resilience networks come in different shapes and sizes. All the extreme weather shelters have been improvised from facilities that have other everyday uses. The Oregon Convention Center is a multi-purpose convention space. In the Portland Building the shelter spaces were large meeting or presentation spaces. In the other facilities gyms were used for the shelter operations. The groups of nearby neighbors that we organize are each a small resilience network that is facilitated and supported by our Sabin Neighborhood Emergency Team, which is itself yet another resilience network.

These resilience hubs and resilience networks are a critical layer of response to emergencies in Portland, but not all parts of Oregon have the emergency response infrastructure that we have. In addition, even an extreme weather event that lasts more than just a couple days can strain our emergency response system. A prolonged extreme weather event, or a large earthquake, would overwhelm us. We and the rest of Oregon need the cost-effective head start on preparation that can be provided by HB 2990.

While I support HB 2990, I will note that it appears that the language of the proposed amendment to HB 2990 introduces some potentially unintended negative consequences to the Bill. The proposed added subsections 1(1)(a)(D)-(H), with the word "and" at the end of subsection (G), would appear to eliminate from the definition of Resilience Hub all of the extreme weather shelters where I have worked. For

example, I think none of them would have met the requirements of subsection (D). Resilience Hubs that meet the requirements of subsection (D) would be nice, but I think other resilience hubs that do not meet that requirement should not be denied the support to be provided by HB 2990. Also, the intended scope of the phrase “outside of a physical Resilience Hub facility” in proposed amended subsection 1(1)(b) makes the definition of Resilience Network confusing. Please consider deleting or significantly modifying the proposed amendment to avoid these negative changes.

Thank you for considering my comments.

-Mark Meininger