

Submitter: Ernie Walters  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means  
Measure: SB5506

Dear Members of the Joint Ways & Means Committee,

I urge you to prioritize investments in community resilience. Currently, key investments outlined in the People's Budget to support environmental and economic resilience are not adequately funded under the Co-Chairs' Budget Framework. Legislators must make these investments now, rather than channeling even more revenue into our already strong and healthy rainy day fund.

Oregon can't wait. Frontline communities are most impacted by the climate crisis, including people of color, low-income families, people with disabilities, and people in rural areas. Right now, we have an opportunity to make communities in every corner of the state more resilient by ensuring they have safe and affordable housing, access to clean energy, and community support before, during, and after climate disasters.

The Resilience Agenda's legislative solutions will create a more healthy and resilient Oregon where everyone can thrive. If we don't address our state's challenges NOW, they will only get worse and more expensive to solve.

I urge you to prioritize a strategic climate budget that includes:

- Building and strengthening community efforts to prepare for and recover from climate disasters through Community Resilience Hubs (House Bill 2990).
- Securing a clean-energy future through the Resilient, Efficient Buildings Package (Senate Bills 868, 869, 870, and 871).

The state has historic levels of rainy day funds - over \$2 billion. Lawmakers must use resources RIGHT NOW instead of adding to reserves. Making investments now will create more resilient and financially stable communities for the long term. Many Oregonians are still on the pathway to recovery after multiple crises, and we cannot leave them behind.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of a strong, strategic, and resilience-focused 2023-25 biennium budget.

We are stronger together. Resilient communities can make the difference between surviving and thriving.

Sincerely,  
Ernie Walters