

Re: SB 1530 -3 Amendment

Dear Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson, and members of the Senate Committee on Housing and Development:

My name is Ana Molina, I live in Portland, and I am Advocacy and Systems Director of Oregon Just Transition Alliance, a movement of communities facing environmental racism, climate change, and economic exploitation.

Solving Oregon's housing crisis is about more than building new housing, it's about keeping low-income families safely in homes that are already built. When everyone in our community has a healthy home with affordable utility bills, it will contribute to greater housing security for *all* Oregonians. Our alliance is submitting testimony in favor of SB 1530-3 and thank you for including Healthy Homes funding at \$7.5 million.

In the last four years, Oregonians have faced an ongoing pandemic, devastating wildfires, and heat waves that took the lives of more than 100 people. Just a few weeks ago, an ice storm ripped through our state, leaving 15 people dead and 135,000 Oregonians without power. These events are compounding issues we already deal with: housing insecurity and the climate crisis, to name two.

While many of us have been impacted, frontline communities have felt it first and worst, which includes Black people, Indigenous people, and people of color, as well as low-income families, people with disabilities, and those in rural areas.

A broken window lets frigid air or extreme summer heat inside. A heat pump without an upgraded electricity panel will not run. The Healthy Homes Grant Program makes essential home repairs accessible to low-income families, including electrical upgrades, mold abatement, and the installation of smoke filtration systems. Federal, state, and local programs pay for some but not all repairs. Healthy Homes fills in funding gaps so a low-income family can thrive during the next winter storm.

While initial funding was a good start, it will run out of money because there is so much need. The legislature must invest funds in 2024 to keep the program going.

Almost half of Oregon homes and apartments were built before 1980. This housing stock is not efficient and in desperate need of repairs that will increase resistance to heat, cold, and wildfire smoke. Frontline communities are most likely to live in old housing stock, which places us with an unfair burden.

To help low-income Oregonians build resilience against the next wildfire or winter storm. Our alliance is calling on you to support SB 1530-3, which includes funding for the Healthy Homes Grant Program.

We're in a housing crisis and a climate crisis, and Oregon must tackle both. Healthy Homes will help people on the frontlines stay housed by lowering the cost of living, improving health, and increasing resilience to extreme weather events.

We thank the Committee for allocating the \$7.5 million to keep the healthy homes program afloat. However if we want to continue to help vulnerable households maintain their housing, lower living expenses, and enhance health and resilience we respectfully urge the committee to consider further investments this session of the \$15 million.

Sincerely,

Ana Molina
Advocacy and Systems Director
Oregon Just Transition Alliance