



To: Chair Helm; Vice-Chair Schouten and Vice-Chair Reschke; Members of the House Committee on Energy & Environment

From: Tracy Rutten, League of Oregon Cities

Date: April 2, 2019

RE: Support for HB 3408

The League of Oregon Cities appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 3408 and thanks Representative Janeen Sollman for introducing this important legislation.

This past year, the LOC Energy & Environment Policy Committee identified funding for wood smoke reduction programs as a legislative recommendation for the 2019 legislative session. We had hoped to be able to support a funding request through the Department of Environmental Quality's budget but the funding request for wood smoke reduction programs was unfortunately not included in the Governor's recommended budget for 2019-21.

HB 3408 would appropriate \$500,000 in general funds to the Residential Solid Fuel Heating Air Quality Improvement Fund. Woodstove smoke is one of the most significant sources of fine particulate and toxic air pollution in Oregon, often jeopardizing public health and putting communities at risk of violating federal air quality standards.

Woodstove smoke is a problem for many Oregon communities that struggle with both the public health impacts and economic threat of being designated as nonattainment under the federal Clean Air Act. To address this challenge, local governments need access to funding for wood smoke reduction programs. Such programs have proven effective at reducing wood smoke in communities and include public education, enforcement, incentives for woodstove change-outs (to ductless heat pumps or certified stoves, weatherization assistance for low-income households and providing residents with dry, seasoned fire wood which burns cleaner.

A 2016 taskforce report that was submitted to the legislature indicated that there are approximately 150,000 uncertified stoves in the state, and that while Oregon has a long and successful history of replacing woodstoves in certain communities, money is sporadic and limited. HB 3408 will allow Oregon to continue to make steps forward in addressing this long-standing challenge.

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