

Greetings to the Oregon House Energy and Environment Committee, thank you for receiving my testimony.

I am writing to you to testify that SERA Architects, a 50+ year old, Oregon-based, architecture and planning firm is in strong support of HB 2398. Our firm is committed to sustainable design for the built environment, and to making people's every day lives better. Advanced building codes that promote climate-smart design achieve both of these goals.

Buildings are the second largest source of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Oregon after the transportation sector; it is essential that Oregon immediately begin to bend the curve downward in the building sector. Constructing more efficient buildings now is one of the least cost ways to do this, as new buildings will account for nearly 25-30% of overall building stock by 2050. Oregon's building code, and especially its Reach Code need to acknowledge this, and facilitate municipalities and jurisdictions to employ those codes for rapid improvement of the State's building stock. HB 2398 does this, while also unifying the State's approach to predictable code improvement, which is invaluable to the design/construction/development market. HB 2398 avoids a potential patchwork of different codes in different jurisdictions by creating one uniform option to adopt the statewide Reach Code, or maintain the statewide base residential and commercial codes. With HB 2398, Building Codes Division (BCD) would update the Reach Code every three years, just as they are required to update the commercial and residential codes; it further requires BCD to ensure that the Reach Code is at least 10% more energy efficient than the residential and commercial base codes each code cycle.

HB 2398 would allow local jurisdictions to enable investment in higher efficiency buildings sooner, and avoid costly retrofits later on, and it creates the opportunity for municipalities who wish to move faster in reducing GHG emissions in the building sector to adopt a uniform higher standard through the Oregon Reach Code. This will promote innovation, and faster industry uptake of the progressively more stringent code.

In addition, building to the Reach Code level will not significantly increase the cost of construction, but it will significantly reduce the energy burden of the people living in the homes and buildings. The 10% energy performance gains required by HB2398 are cost effective to achieve. For instance the recent ZERO coalition proposal for the 2021 Residential Reach Code found that 15% energy savings was possible with only \$790 in incremental cost. That proposal was discussed by the Building Code Division's advisory board without disagreement and can be found here <https://www.oregon.gov/bcd/codes-stand/code-adoption/Documents/21reach-zero-co-proposal.pdf> along with its savings workbook <https://www.oregon.gov/bcd/codes-stand/code-adoption/Documents/21reach-zero-co-proposal-workbook.xlsx>.

SERA Architects is a firm focused on being part of the climate crisis solution, and we believe strongly that Oregon can do more than it is currently doing in this regard. Passing HB 2398 is a key piece to that puzzle and should be heartily endorsed by the House Energy and Environment committee, the House and Senate and then signed by Governor Brown.

Thank you for your consideration of SERA Architect's testimony.
Clark Brockman, AIA, LEED Fellow
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