

Hello Chair Marsh and members of the committee. My name is Amy Warren. I am the director and co-founder of Kôr Community Land Trust in Bend, Oregon. We are a nonprofit organization that provides affordable and environmentally conscious homeownership opportunities locally. We build to goal net-zero energy standards and believe firmly that while energy efficiency benefits all, its benefits have a greater impact on those who fall within the low-income threshold. Through the lens of diversity, equity and inclusion, we believe that the benefit from energy efficient building practices should be afforded to all, not just those who can afford the upgrade.

I am here on behalf of Kôr today to support HB 2398, and see it as a sensible step to provide another option to local governments to increase the energy efficiency of new affordable housing. The bill would not mandate anything. It simply gives local governments like Bend the option to consider adopting the Reach Code as mandatory; such consideration would allow for local stakeholders to weigh in with support or opposition to such a decision.

While Kôr is sensitive to anything that could drive up housing costs, our experience building goal net-zero housing units, which are significantly higher than 10 percent above code, makes us confident that 10 percent above code will not significantly increase the cost of new affordable housing and would save occupants on energy costs of living in those units, not to mention the beneficial impact on climate change.

Thank you for your time.