

Submitter: patty falkenstein

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Environment and Natural Resources

Measure: HB4058

Subject: HB 4058 Public Testimony. 2/1/2022

Chair Marsh, Vice Chairs Hudson, Brock Smith, and members of the Committee;

I am a care provider working directly with a person with a developmental disability.

I urge a YES on HB 4058 Relating to Heat Relief, Declaring an Emergency.
Last summer during the heat dome event nearly 100 Oregonians died.

I am very concerned about the processes of this legislation. Folks can't access a program they don't know about. I only recently learned air conditioners were somewhat available and I have been a provider for 10 years. I would like the OHA to require case managers to identify vulnerable people, especially folks with ID/DD living in apartments where landlords have denied air conditioning. Please don't make the application process cumbersome. You don't need to see 6 years of back taxes, a doctor prescription and a note from your mother. People just give up when the application is too difficult, not in their language, or the decision is at the mercy of someone with an ax to grind. Another barrier is if only one contractor is allowed to do the installations, the backlog will be prohibitive.

I recently had a water main break and tried to get help through the Washington county program for people with disabilities. I found out I had to know there was a program BEFORE the emergency, had to apply for help BEFORE the EMERGENCY happened, could only be inspected by their designated person (Christmas eve with a disabled person in the house with no access to water) could not use a licensed and bonded plumber (these folks require you to sign a contract that you will only do business with them, you have to pay half up front (4500\$) and the paperwork was prohibitive. I wound up putting the 8500\$ charge on credit cards so that I could have working plumbing. My fear was that DHS would deem the weeks wait to try to use the county program as unsuitable for my daughter.

There is little point in funding programs people can't actually use. We only have 4 months until the next heat wave and more vulnerable people at risk. Please move with alacrity and forethought.

Sincerely

Patty Falkenstein Personal Support Worker