

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

February 22, 2023

Re: SB 852 support

Chair Sollman, Vice-Chair Findley, and members of the Senate
Committee On Energy and Environment,

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon and Oregon Interfaith Power & Light (EMO and OIPL) would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on SB 852. EMO consists of 15 member denominations and over 150 congregations, faith-based organizations, and institutions. We also partner with groups and individuals from many faith traditions to form Oregon Interfaith Power & Light.

EMO and OIPL support SB 852, the “Community Navigator for Energy” bill. We appreciate the grants, rebates, and incentives available to environmental justice communities from the Oregon Department of Energy. As people of faith in Oregon, we care deeply about the impacts of climate change on all people and other species, and particularly the disproportionate impact on those whose communities have been traditionally disadvantaged or who have the least economic means to escape extreme weather and other disruptions.

SB 852 would help even out some of these disparities by aiding small, community-based organizations with technical assistance and other access to grants and incentives that might otherwise be outside the scope of their expertise or organizational capacity. These community-based organizations are led by caring and hard-working staff and volunteers who spend their time working with the populations who need the grants and incentives offered by the ODOE most. Offering assistance and guidance to CBOs working directly with environmental justice populations will help the organizations do what they do best, while also getting funding and incentives to those for whom the programs are designed.

Sincerely,

Cherice Bock, MDiv, MS environmental studies
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Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon
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