



February 27, 2023

House Committee on Climate Energy and Environment

RE: Opposition to HB 3152

Chair Marsh, Vice Chairs and Members of the Committee:

The Washington County Chamber of Commerce, the largest chamber in Washington County, comprising over 825 members and nearly 75,000 jobs is writing today in opposition to HB 3152. As an organization that seeks to promote healthy and equitable communities, the Chamber views this legislation as a bill that would harm senior citizens, residents living in low-income circumstances and historically disadvantaged populations by eliminating their ability to improve energy efficiency and eliminating energy choice. HB 3152 would essentially cut off these vulnerable families and households' ability to access available funds to upgrade, improve or replace aging appliances, solely based on energy type, with no thought to cost, reliability or actually reducing emissions. Healthy communities need reliable, affordable energy and the policy outlined in this bill would raise energy costs on both systems for no definable benefit, and sacrifice resiliency that two well maintained energy systems provide.

We believe HB 3152 would effectively discriminate against the most susceptible Oregonians by denying energy choice and eliminating options more affluent families still have access to. If low-income families desired a natural gas choice, it would no longer be available to them thus penalizing them for their economic circumstances.

The Oregon PUC has traditionally been in the role of an economic regulator, this bill pivots that mission to an environmental regulator. That should concern residents relying upon the PUC to focus on regulating the cost and efficiency of utilities in Oregon.

We urge the committee to vote no on this bill, preserve energy choice, protect energy resiliency in our region, encourage energy efficiency on both energy systems and focus on fuel neutral policies to achieve greenhouse gas emissions reductions.

Sincerely,

Deanna Palm
President/CEO