



March 16, 2023

Oregon State Legislature  
Senate Committee on Energy and Environment  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SB 868 - Relating to Resilient Efficient Buildings

Chair Sollman, Vice-Chair Findley, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Oregon Chapter Sierra Club and its 74,000 members and supporters, we are writing in support of Senate Bill 868 in the Resilient, Efficient Buildings Policy Package.

SB 868 will align our energy efficiency programs with Oregon's climate goals, accelerate heat pump deployment, and ramp up other energy efficiency efforts like weatherizing and retrofitting existing homes.

SB 868, along with SB 869, SB 870, and SB 871 within the Resilient, Efficient Buildings Policy Package, are climate-smart. Every day we are reminded of the fact that our world is changing due to the amount of carbon we are releasing into the atmosphere. The fact that buildings are among Oregon's largest sources of climate pollution means that they can also be a climate solution! Therefore, we strongly encourage legislation like SB 868 to transition Oregon away from fossil fuels used to heat and power buildings toward clean electric alternatives.

Buildings are also an important defense against extreme heat and wildfire smoke, in that they keep wildfire smoke and other outdoor air pollution out, while helping to regulate indoor temperatures. However, there are barriers to people updating their homes to make them safer and healthier. This legislative package will help provide more insulation, sturdier windows and doors, and encourage transitioning to clean electricity for heating and cooking. It is critically important that all of our homes and buildings become more resilient in order to protect us from current and future climate harms.



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Additionally, buildings are key to ensuring energy affordability for all by helping families save money on utility bills. More efficient, all-electric homes and buildings can reduce both operation and construction costs—and the transition to clean, efficient buildings will support local, family-wage jobs and provide an opportunity to build on Oregon’s existing clean energy economy.

Finally, it is important to note the growing body of evidence that clearly shows the use of gas in homes and buildings is having significant negative impacts on indoor and outdoor air quality, and in turn, detrimental impacts on public health and safety. A recent study found that almost 13% of childhood asthma nationwide is attributable to exposure to gas stoves. It is critical that we pass policies like those in the Resilient, Efficient Buildings package to transition our homes and buildings off polluting gas and adopt clean, electric alternatives.

We urge you to support Senate Bill 868 in the Resilient, Efficient Buildings Policy Package.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Dix, Chair  
Legislative Committee  
Oregon Chapter Sierra Club