



March 16, 2023

RE: SB 870

Members of the Committee:

My name is Kerry Meade and I'm the Executive Director of the Northwest Energy Efficiency Council, a nonprofit business association of the Oregon and Washington State building efficiency community. For over twenty-five years, NEEC members have delivered energy efficiency and other related services to the buildings sector. Our organization was involved in the development of the Washington State Building Performance Standard, and we have been providing technical assistance to building owners as they work to comply with the law. Our members have extensive experience in energy efficiency and building energy management, and for the last several years, they have been working directly with building owners in complying with the Washington standard. We are strong supporters of SB 870 and applaud the Oregon Legislature's leadership on this issue.

Building performance standards are commonsense policy that ask building owners to be efficient in the management of how their facilities use energy. A building owner is typically asked to benchmark the energy performance of their facility against peer buildings of the same type. Then, based on the requirements of the rules, owners undertake various projects that bring their buildings up to the standards of their peers, if needed. We know that these actions will result in direct savings on monthly energy bills, improve indoor air quality and conditions for occupants, and that the better management of the energy performance of buildings has broader impacts in supporting safe, resilient, and reliable power for all.

Since energy and building codes target new construction, conditions in existing buildings are usually not aligned with the standards of the day. This means our indoor environments, where we spend the bulk of our day, can have high levels of unhealthy air and generally unsafe conditions. A performance standard will assure that all covered buildings are brought up to the safety and efficiency standards that make sense for the building type, and that in achieving the standard for their building type, owners only need implement the improvements that have a positive cost benefit. This is smart, transformative policy.

So again, we urge you to take action on this important topic and pass SB 870. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

Sincerely,

Kerry Meade
Executive Director
Northwest Energy Efficiency Council