

# Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

March 16, 2023

Re: Support of SB 870

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

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) and Oregon Interfaith Power & Light (OIPL) offer our enthusiastic support for the package of bills included in the Resilient Efficient Policy Package: SB 868, SB 869, SB 870, and SB 871, along with the anticipated amendments referenced by Senator Lieber and Representative Marsh during the March 14 committee hearing. Additionally, we have expressed our support of the companion bill, HB 3166, which will promote the interagency collaboration that will be so important to help Oregon residents learn about and access new and existing federal and state incentives through a one-stop-shop.

EMO is comprised of 15 member denominations plus over 150 congregations and faith-based institutions across our state. We also partner with many individuals and groups from a variety of faith traditions in our climate and environmental work through Oregon Interfaith Power & Light (OIPL). OIPL encourages Oregon's faith communities to strive to care for our neighbors and the Earth, our common home, through individual and collective energy efficiency and renewable energy projects to reduce our climate impact and offer safe and healthy places for our communities to gather. For example, we have an Oregon Interfaith Solar Campaign and we partner with the national Interfaith Power & Light to offer a "Cool Congregations" program to help houses of worship with weatherization and renewable energy projects. SB 868–871 are in line with the work we are already doing and would make this type of work easier and more affordable for individuals and organizations so we can all move toward healthier, more energy efficient, and more climate friendly buildings. Therefore, EMO and OIPL are proud members of the broad coalition of groups and individuals that support this package of bills.

**Regarding SB 870**, we support the gradual improvement of Oregon's commercial buildings toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving public health for those who work in the buildings. We appreciate that SB 870 sets incremental standards so commercial buildings can be upgraded and retrofitted over time, spreading out the cost over many years. We also appreciate that the options are flexible and a building owner can select the efficiencies and retrofits that are the best fit for their particular situation. We feel this provides a practical path toward more sustainable and healthy buildings. Since a similar bill is already in place in Washington State, it helps businesses in the region to have comparable standards.

We have been following the progress of the Joint Task Force on Resilient Efficient Buildings since its inception. The four bills that emerged out of the impressive work of this task force provide an excellent first step for what will need to be a multiple step process to adequately address the building sector's contribution to the climate crisis and enhance building resiliency.

## Board Members

The Rev. Roberta Egli  
*Chair*

The Rev. Sean Langdon  
*Chair-elect*

The Rev. Michael Grogan  
*Immediate Past Chair*

The Rev. Paul Belz-Templeman  
*Treasurer*

Barbara O'Hare  
*Secretary*

The Rt. Rev. Diana Akiyama  
The Rev. Andrew Bansemer  
Shawn Daley

The Rev. Richenda Fairhurst  
The Rev. Ernestine Flemister  
Alaide Vilchis Ibarra

The Rev. Beverly Jackson  
The Rev. Linda Jaramillo  
The Rev. Erika Marksby  
Patty Nance

The Rev. Cecil Prescod  
Jane Snyder  
Pedro Sosa

The Rev. Alicia Speidel  
Julia Banner Spence  
The Rev. Charlotte Wells

The Rev. Dr. Rodney Page  
*Lifetime Member*

Frank So  
*President*

Interchurch Center  
245 S. Bancroft St., Ste. B  
Portland, Oregon 97239

phone (503) 221-1054  
email [emo@emoregon.org](mailto:emo@emoregon.org)  
website [EMOoregon.org](http://EMOoregon.org)

At the March 14 committee hearing, Senator Lieber and Representative Marsh did an excellent job of presenting the policy framework, the major problems each bill attempts to address, and the actual strategies and actions found in the bills to address these problems. The overwhelming support from the oral and written testimony reaffirm that they are on the right track. We appreciate that there are several amendments still to emerge; this is entirely appropriate given the complicated nature of the issues addressed and the benefits of seeking to identify common ground among multiple parties.

Climate change is the most pressing issue of our time. We know that homes and buildings are the first line of defense against climate harms, such as unprecedented heat domes and climate-fueled wildfires and smoke. We also know that homes and buildings are currently the second largest source of climate pollution in Oregon.

The Resilient Efficient Buildings Package offers a major contribution to the vital effort to address climate change, meet our energy needs in an affordable, just, and sustainable manner, and protect public health. We encourage all members of this committee to support these bills in this committee and throughout the legislative process.

Cherice Bock  
MDiv, MS environmental studies  
Creation Justice Advocate  
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon  
Oregon Interfaith Power & Light