

# OREGON BUSINESS FOR CLIMATE

Senate Committee on Energy & Environment

Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

March 18, 2023

RE: SUPPORT FOR SENATE BILLS 868, 869, 870, and 871

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

Oregon Business for Climate is pleased to voice our **strong support for the Resilient, Efficient Buildings Policy Package**. The package includes four bills that will reduce climate pollution, while supporting healthy, affordable, resilient communities and family-wage jobs across Oregon. From a **business** perspective, these bills represent **strong Oregon opportunities for growth, innovation, and cost savings**.

## Context

**Oregon Business for Climate** is a league of nearly 100 businesses across the state, representing almost 30,000 employees in a range of industries from manufacturing to agriculture to transportation to healthcare. We believe climate leadership is critical to the health of Oregon's industries and communities, and will help our state re-emerge as a leader thriving in the growing clean economy. To that end, **our mission is to advance urgent, ambitious, equitable climate policies and programs designed to help spur innovation and economic opportunity while effectively and responsibly reducing emissions**.

## A Clear Opportunity for Progress

With the global crisis accelerating, we must capture smart opportunities to address climate change. In parallel with national investments, every state needs to take meaningful action. Right now, Oregon has an opportunity to implement this complete buildings solution (new and existing, residential and commercial) to address second biggest sector source of emissions while moving us toward a thriving, healthier clean economy.

Below is a brief look at opportunities and business benefits from each of these bills. **Thanks to federal funding, and the leverage of private capital spurred by incentives, all of these economic opportunities listed below are multiplied for our state.**

**Healthy Heating and Cooling for All (SB 868)** will align our energy efficiency programs with our state climate goals and accelerate deployment of 500,000 heat pumps

- Sparks creation of new installation and energy efficiency retrofit contracting companies throughout the state
- Creates thousands of small business jobs, in local communities, that can't be outsourced
- Drives an economic multiplier in each of these communities as these businesses and employees spend money that recirculates on main street
- Captures federal dollars that multiply these opportunities

**Build Smart from the Start (SB 869)** will update Oregon's base building code so that all new buildings are constructed to be more efficient and resilient from the start

- Creates opportunities in new construction design and architecture and engineering to meet the needs of today's efficient buildings – and prepares our companies and employees to lead in the architecture, construction and engineering industry going forward
- Sets Oregon up to be an exporter of this expertise, bringing further benefits back to the state
- Spurs innovation in materials and other systems, launching new companies and technologies, and adding export opportunities

**Building Performance Standards (SB 870)** will improve the energy efficiency of large, energy-intensive commercial buildings

- Drives opportunities in commercial retrofit design and engineering to bring buildings up to modern performance levels – and prepares our companies and employees to lead in the architecture, construction and engineering industry going forward
- Sets Oregon up to be an exporter of this expertise, bringing further benefits back to the state
- Drives cost savings for Oregon businesses – from owners to companies leasing space in these healthier, more efficient buildings
- Create opportunities in the financial sector to help businesses capitalize these upfront costs and capture long-term savings
- Spurs innovation in materials and other systems, launching new companies and technologies, and adding export opportunities
- Captures federal dollars that multiply these opportunities

**Smart State Buildings (SB 871)** will help to reduce barriers for public buildings to be made more efficient and healthier

- Boosts opportunity for providers serving the sector – with retrofit work, smart performance-based energy contracting, strategic energy management systems, and others
- Provides a market for deployment of leading-edge solutions – giving them the scale of operations they need as these solutions move into the broader market

## **Benefits for Our Communities, Customers, and Employees**

Oregon's recent winter weather events—with consecutive days of below-freezing temperatures across the state—are yet another reminder of the vital role of homes and buildings in protecting Oregonians against ever-worsening climate impacts. Energy-efficient homes and buildings protect Oregonians against climate impacts by maintaining healthy indoor air quality and temperatures, and save families and businesses money on utility bills by reducing energy waste.

It is vital that Oregon families and businesses are empowered to make needed improvements to increase the resilience, efficiency, and affordability of their homes and buildings. The Resilient, Efficient Buildings legislative package will be key to breaking down barriers and ensuring access to life-saving technologies like efficient heat pumps, and enable families to make important upgrades—like better insulated doors and windows—that help maintain safe and healthy indoor air quality and temperatures.

Energy-efficient buildings are key not only to protecting health, but also to improving affordability. Efficient, all-electric homes and buildings can reduce costs in both construction and operation, saving families and businesses money on utility bills by reducing energy waste. Further, the transition to resilient, efficient buildings provides an opportunity to build on Oregon's existing clean energy economy by supporting local, family-wage jobs that can't be exported out of state.

**Oregon Business for Climate strongly supports passage of the Resilient, Efficient Buildings Package.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Miller", written in a cursive style.

Tim Miller  
Director, Oregon Business for Climate