



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Testimony in Support of HB 2990

March 22, 2023

Chair Marsh, Vice-Chairs Levy and Levy, and members of the committee,

My name is Khanh Pham, State Representative for House District 46. I am proud to be a chief sponsor of HB 2990 Community Resilience Hubs along with Representative Marsh, because it meets the urgent need to support our communities' resilience in the face of increasing climate emergencies across the state of Oregon, and builds on ongoing emergency response that volunteers, organizations, and local municipalities already provide as vital lifelines in times of crisis.

Wherever we call home, it is certain that our communities have been impacted by climate disaster in the past few years whether from fire and smoke, flooding, landslides, ice, or extreme heat. In my district in outer SE Portland, Lents neighborhood is one of the hottest places in Portland where community members have lost their lives due to extreme heat in both 2021 and 2022. In a typical year, there are no heat deaths in Multnomah County. In 2022 5 people lost their lives due to heat related causes. In 2021 there were 72, 69 of which were attributed to the heat dome in June. Most of these deaths were elderly community members who lived alone and did not have access to air conditioning.¹

These disasters are not felt equally and our communities are not equally equipped to respond. Low income communities with larger immigrant and BIPOC populations like mine carry a heavier burden from extreme weather and less resources to respond in times of crisis. We know that our emergency response systems are strapped and it is our neighbors who often make the difference between comfort and chaos, life and death. This bill was brought forward and supported by community groups from the Portland metro to rural Oregon. It's risky to claim anything is universal, but I would bet that Oregonians in all 36 of our counties would agree that showing up for our neighbors is what transforms a place you live into a community, and these relationships are essential in times of crisis.

This bill would create the opportunity for our neighborhood community responders to strengthen their ongoing resiliency efforts and ensure more robust and equitable responses in the face of inevitable crises we must weather together. I urge your support for HB 2990. Thank you!

¹ [Multnomah County](#)