

Submitter: Forrest Cammack

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Measure: HB3459

Chair Marsh, Vice-Chair Bobby Levy, and Vice-Chair Emerson Levy,

Thank you for this opportunity to express my support of HB 3459, which would protect vulnerable Oregonians from being disconnected from heat and electricity.

My name is Forrest Cammack and I live in Newberg, Oregon.

As a practicing Christian, I firmly believe in the values of caring for the poor and vulnerable. HB 3459 aligns with these values through its prioritization of vulnerable populations. Heat and electricity are basic human rights, and no one should be denied these utilities simply because they do not have sufficient funds.

When faced with disconnections, families are forced to choose which of their basic needs are more important. 20% of households reported going with little to no food or necessary medication in order to keep the heat on. This is unacceptable. Power outages can be deadly for those members of our community who are most vulnerable. Evidence suggests that many of the deaths that occurred during the major storms of the last several years happened not because of the storms themselves but because of the resulting power outages. Access to electricity can be a matter of life and death, and as the world transitions off of fossil fuels, access to electricity will become even more important.

For these reasons, I urge you to support HB 3459 to ensure access to heat and electricity for all.

Thank you.

Forrest Cammack, Elder at North Valley Friends Church