



350PDX  
3625 N. Mississippi Avenue  
Portland, OR 97227  
350pdx.org

Re: Support SB 1530 -3 Amendment

February 14, 2024

Dear Chair Jama, Vice Chair Anderson, and members of the Senate Committee on Housing and Development,

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of SB 1530 with the -3 Amendment, part of the Housing Stability and Production Package. I serve as the climate policy manager at 350PDX, a grassroots environmental nonprofit with thousands of members in the Portland area, advocating for climate justice.

We are encouraged to see the many investments in housing in this bill, particularly with a focus on affordable housing, rental assistance, funds for shelters for people without homes or who are recovering from drug addiction, and other funds allocated to help ameliorate our state's housing challenges and address equity issues. We are particularly happy to see the aspects of this bill that take into account **the realities of the climate crisis at the same time as the need to make sure all Oregonians are adequately housed**, such as: **\$7.5 million toward Healthy Homes, \$4 million toward heat pumps, and \$10 million to convert existing buildings into affordable housing**. We appreciate the emphasis on housing solutions that take place **within existing urban growth boundaries**.

While there is much to like about this bill, we would suggest **funding Healthy Homes at \$15 million**. The Healthy Homes grants help low-income Oregonians stay in their homes, experience better health outcomes, reduce smoke inhalation during wildfire events, and improve energy efficiency, which reduces our state's energy burden while also keeping families' energy bills affordable. We advocated for the Healthy Homes bill in 2021 and are excited to see it coming to fruition. This is an excellent program that needs full funding. Due to more climate emergencies each year, with extreme heat and cold causing a choice between unsafe conditions or unaffordable utility bills, it is important to **make sure everyone has access to safe and efficient homes, which requires full funding**. The Healthy Homes program helps fill the gaps in areas where federal funding and other programs do not cover things such as mold or other repairs that must be done before weatherization projects can occur.

Additionally, it is important to not only build new affordable housing, but to also **keep existing housing in place**. This requires funds to help pay for repairs, particularly in rentals, in order to keep rents affordable. **Please consider adding further funding to include repairing existing homes**. Keeping affordable housing within urban growth boundaries helps make

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projects more affordable and does not require the build-out of additional services such as water, sewer, electricity, and roads to new areas. Affordable homes within towns and cities can reduce the need to own a car or drive long distances to access services. **These solutions are good for people and the planet.**

By investing in Healthy Homes, repurposing existing buildings into homes, and keeping existing affordable housing in good repair, Oregon can make sure everyone has access to a safe and healthy place to live. This keeps frontline community members, people of color, seniors, and low-income people in their homes. It helps make our communities more resilient, mitigates climate change, and does not use more resources than we need. **These are the kinds of holistic housing solutions our state needs.**

Cherice Bock  
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