

Submitter: Emily Heilbrun

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3170

I live in Eugene and have been a volunteer with Egan Warming Centers for more than 12 years. Last January, during the big freeze, I volunteered many shifts at a center that's about half a mile from my house. Because I had the appropriate equipment to attach to my walking shoes, I could safely walk in the extremely icy conditions. Many people slipped and hurt themselves badly.

Normally, Egan Warming Centers, a form of mutual aid, works quite smoothly. What was shocking during the ice storm was that no parts of our government came forward to assist on the front lines. At the same time, some housed people sought shelter with us because they had nowhere else warm to go.

At one point another volunteer and I, after the shelter had closed for the day, tried to assist a mentally challenged man who was sitting on the ice outside the shelter. We called CAHOOTS on his behalf but they were so overwhelmed with calls that they were unable to respond to him for many hours.

All this is to say that the existence of well-funded resilience hubs and networks would have made a big difference. We will certainly have more disasters like this in the future.

I urge you to pass HB 3170 which will provide additional funding for Resilience Hubs and Networks. Lives depend on it, as I saw from the front lines.