



February 3, 2025

House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Comment in Support of HB 3170: Resilience Hubs and Networks Funding

Dear Chair Lively, Vice-Chair Gamba, Vice-Chair Bobby Levy, and Members of the House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment,

My name is Joshua Baker and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of Lloyd EcoDistrict, a community-based organization dedicated to advancing resilience, sustainability, and emergency preparedness in inner North and Northeast Portland. We strongly support HB 3170 because it invests in the infrastructure and networks that communities across Oregon need to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters.

Extreme weather events, wildfires, and infrastructure failures are increasing in frequency and severity across Oregon, disproportionately impacting low-income communities, people with disabilities, houseless individuals, and those in multifamily housing with limited personal resources. As we saw during the 2021 heat dome, which resulted in nearly 100 deaths in Oregon, our state lacks the coordinated, neighborhood-scale infrastructure necessary to keep people safe.

While traditional emergency response relies heavily on government agencies and large-scale shelters, we know that localized, community-driven resilience hubs are essential to ensuring that fewer Oregonians fall through the cracks. However, funding for these critical efforts has been inconsistent, leaving community groups, nonprofits, and local resilience networks scrambling to fill the gaps.

HB 3170 is another vital step forward in addressing these gaps by investing in permanent, community-based resilience infrastructure that ensures people have access to safe, well-equipped spaces before, during, and after disasters.



Resilience Hubs: A Proven Strategy for Community Preparedness

Resilience hubs are trusted, community-run spaces designed to provide emergency resources, backup power, communication support, and relief services in times of crisis. These hubs can be located in libraries, community centers, affordable housing complexes, faith-based institutions, or other accessible sites, and they serve as lifelines during disasters.

Well-equipped resilience hubs can provide:

- Cooling and clean air refuges during extreme heat and wildfire smoke events.
- Backup power for medical devices, refrigeration for food and medications, and phone charging stations.
- Emergency supply distribution, including water, first aid, and hygiene kits.
- Reliable information-sharing and coordination with emergency responders and mutual aid networks.

However, Oregon does not currently have a dedicated funding stream to expand and sustain these hubs statewide. While some cities and counties have begun piloting resilience hubs, the efforts remain underfunded, fragmented, and heavily reliant on short-term grants or one-time emergency relief funds. HB 3170 provides a framework for ensuring that these hubs are not just temporary solutions but permanent, well-supported community assets.

Why Lloyd EcoDistrict Cares

In the Lloyd area, we see firsthand the gaps in emergency preparedness and resilience infrastructure—and we also see the power of community-driven solutions. Our work over the years has focused on bridging these gaps by supporting vulnerable residents, planning long-term resilience strategies, and strengthening partnerships with frontline organizations. This has included:

- **Supporting Houseless and Vulnerable Residents:** Our long-standing partnership with Right 2 Dream Too (R2DToo), a houseless-serving organization, has shown us the critical role grassroots groups play in disaster response. During extreme heat, cold snaps, and air quality events, R2DToo has provided life-saving shelter and resources to some of Portland's most vulnerable residents—often without consistent or adequate funding.



- **Cooling and Emergency Response Efforts:** During the past two summers Lloyd EcoDistrict operated emergency cooling centers, serving over 700 people during three separate extreme heat events. The need was evident: people arrived overheated, in distress, and desperate for a safe space. This short-term effort was effective but not a sustainable solution—we need long-term, well-equipped resilience hubs that provide cooling, clean air, and emergency supplies.
- **Planning a Resilience Hub at Holladay Park:** We are currently working with community members, local organizations, and experts to develop a Resilience Hub at or near Holladay Park. This hub would serve as a central resource for emergency preparedness, air quality relief, power backup, and community response coordination. However, without stable funding, efforts like this remain stalled or reliant on piecemeal grants.

HB 3170 would provide the critical investment needed to ensure that efforts like ours in Lloyd—and across Oregon—are not just pilot projects but lasting, scalable solutions.

Strengthening the Role of COADs and Community-Based Disaster Networks

Lloyd EcoDistrict is also active in community-based networks like the Portland COAD (Community Organizations Active in Disaster). COAD networks play a crucial role in disaster response by connecting local organizations, coordinating resources, and ensuring that vulnerable populations receive timely assistance. These networks were instrumental in recent crises, including providing emergency cooling stations, food relief, and shelter coordination during extreme weather events.

However, COADs and similar emergency response networks across Oregon lack stable funding, limiting their ability to:

- Conduct year-round preparedness training and outreach to ensure communities are disaster-ready.
- Maintain and expand supply caches in strategic locations.
- Develop long-term emergency response plans in collaboration with local governments.
- Support culturally specific and community-led resilience efforts, ensuring that all Oregonians—regardless of language, income, or ability—have equitable access to emergency resources.



HB 3170 can help close these gaps by funding regional COADs and resilience networks statewide. Without this investment, our emergency response system will remain reactive rather than proactive, leaving communities unprepared for the next disaster.

A Statewide Commitment to Community Resilience

We know that disasters disproportionately impact those with the fewest resources—low-income households, BIPOC communities, seniors, and those with disabilities. Oregon’s response to these challenges cannot rely solely on traditional emergency management systems that are often too slow, centralized, and disconnected from community needs.

Instead, we need a decentralized, community-driven approach that builds resilience from the ground up. HB 3170 provides the vision and funding necessary to make that a reality by supporting:

- The creation and expansion of resilience hubs statewide.
- Sustained investment in COADs and other emergency preparedness networks.
- Equitable disaster response strategies that prioritize vulnerable populations.

Every year, we are reminded of the devastating consequences of failing to prepare for climate-driven disasters. The need for investment in resilience infrastructure is not theoretical—it is urgent. Oregon must take proactive steps to ensure that all residents, especially the most vulnerable, have access to safe spaces, reliable resources, and coordinated emergency support when they need it most.

So far, Resilience Hubs and Networks has invested \$10 million in locally-driven, community-led efforts to prepare us for disaster. During the last grant cycle, the state received over 700 applications and was only able to fund 96 of them, demonstrating the clear need for continued funding for Resilience Hubs and Networks. Lloyd EcoDistrict and a number of our regional partners were among the 600+ applicants who submitted lengthy, time-consuming applications with worthy projects, but were ultimately not funded because the needs across Oregon are so great.

While this \$10 million request is very much needed, it is just a drop in the bucket of what CBOs and local partners need to keep our community members safe. HB 3170 is another critical investment in the long-term safety and resilience of Oregon’s communities though. We urge your strong support for this bill.



LLOYD ECO DISTRICT

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions.
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joshua Baker". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Joshua Baker
Program Manager
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