

Date: February 3, 2025

To: House Committee on Energy and Environment

Subject: Support for Resilience Hubs and Networks

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

My name is Tomi Boolean, and I live in Eastern Oregon in the town of Elgin, and I am writing because I love my community. We care about and support each other in times of need and find creative solutions to lift each other up and solve problems. I support HB 3170 to provide an additional \$10 million in funding for Resilience Hubs and Networks. Extreme weather and wildfires continue to hurt Oregonians, and we must ensure all communities have access to the resources and networks they need to thrive, not just survive.

I support HB 3170 and the continued funding of Resilience Hubs and Networks because:

1. Extreme weather and wildfires have personally negatively affected me and my neighbors in our eastern Oregon community. Extreme weather and wildfires create dangerous conditions. Our human health, our natural resources and our local economy are at risk and do suffer from extreme weather and wildfires.

For example:

- a. Heat and smoke warnings have become commonplace in the summer. Folks without air conditioners struggle with everyday activities due to heat stress and some are even hospitalized. Our forests are facing prolonged drought stress, which enhances the chance of devastating wildfires. Planned outdoor activities and reservations get cancelled, tourism struggles and our local businesses take the hit.
 - b. In the summer of 2023, just outside of Elgin a wildfire broke out. Our citizens and resource hubs came together offering shelter and transportation for both people and their livestock. Luckily, the fire was quickly controlled, but natural resources were lost and it could've been much different and disastrous to the community. These types of challenges underscore the critical need for proactive measures like Resilience hubs. If the fire wasn't controlled our community hubs would struggle to meet the needs of everyone affected.
2. Our community comes together during adverse events. But, our community hubs and networks need more support to expand their offerings, withstand the many challenges of the future and help as many community members as possible.

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.

These grants helped communities repair buildings that are emergency shelters, purchase satellite phones, generators, solar generators, water purification systems, and emergency vehicles; and financed staff positions like nurses and outreach staff. These investments will save lives, help first responders, speed recovery, and benefit the communities that are hit first and worst by extreme weather, wildfires, and other natural disasters.

I urge you to support HB 3170 so we can continue building strong Oregon communities.

Sincerely,
Tomi Boolen
Elgin, Oregon