

Submitter: Alyssa Koomas
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3170

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

My name is Alyssa Koomas and I live in Portland, Oregon. I am writing because I am a public health practitioner and parent of two young children who cares deeply about my community. In our neighborhood of inner SE Portland, we have single family homes, apartment complexes, lofts, and houseless neighbors all who are at risk by varying degrees to extreme weather events. They all deserve safety and protection. So I'm writing in support of 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 I want everyone in my community to have access to vital resources when disaster strikes, not just those who can afford it. I remember what it felt like in 2020 when wildfires had us wearing masks outside and then inside our homes to protect vulnerable lungs. I remember my neighborhood email list lighting up with requests for air purifiers, and people sharing links to YouTube tutorials to DIY your own air purifier. All the local stores and even Amazon were out of stock of air purifiers and items needed to build your own. Neighbors who could, shared what they had so everyone had enough. We had one air purifier and put it in our children's room. Yet when I left my house I saw my houseless neighbors down the street with no protection from the smoke and no means of escape. Our ability to take care of one another and be safe should not be limited by our income or ability to afford stable housing. As a parent, I cannot imagine what it would feel like to not be able to provide clean air for my children to breathe, or a cool/warm enough environment for them to be safe.

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 69 of them, less than 10%, 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,
Alyssa Koomas
Portland, OR