



February 4, 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 Cynthia Ramirez and I am a Policy Associate with PCUN, Oregon’s Farmworker Union. At PCUN, we work to empower farmworkers and Latinx working families to improve their working conditions through community building, organizing, and policy advocacy. I am writing on behalf of our members to express support for 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.

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

Across our state, low-income, rural and communities of color are disproportionately impacted in times of disaster. During the 2020 wildfires and COVID-19 outbreak, our staff and volunteers were essential responders to meet the needs of our community in Woodburn. We came together as a community during an urgent time and provided support through supply donations, volunteering, and donating to our farmworker emergency fund for farmworkers affected by COVID-19 and the wildfires. Our farmworkers have no escape from natural disasters. From working outside in extreme weather conditions to returning home to non-resilient housing; Resilience Hubs and Networks provide a safe space for our communities. Farmworkers living in low-income housing are disproportionately affected during all kinds of disasters including extreme heat waves. Without emergency shelters or safe spaces, workers are forced to continue working long hours in unbearable heat, risking heat stroke, dehydration, and even death. While our community was able to mobilize quickly during the wildfires and COVID-19 outbreak, we need to continue being as prepared as we can to support our communities.

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,
Cynthia Ramirez
Policy Associate
PCUN