

Submitter: Caren Caldwell
On Behalf Of: Medford United Church of Christ and Rogue Climate
Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3170

To: House Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment
Subject: Support for Resilience Hubs and Networks
Chair Lively, Vice–Chair Gamba, Vice–Chair Bobby Levy,
and Members of the House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Chair Lively, vice-chairs and members of the Committee:
Good morning.

My name is Caren Caldwell, and I live in Ashland, OR.
I am a retired minister
and a member of the Medford United Church of Christ.

I support HB 3170 to provide an additional \$10 million in funding
for community Resilience Hubs and Networks.

My family experienced the Almeda Fire in 2020.
My son’s home burned to ash as did the homes of several church members.

Our church responded to community needs following the fire
by providing funds for people’s utilities
and gift baskets as they moved into RVs in Talent.

Extreme weather and wildfires continue to hurt Oregonians.
We must ensure all communities have access to the resources
and networks we need to thrive,
not just survive.

Continued funding of Resilience Hubs and Networks will help us do that.

1. Since the Almeda Fire, members of our congregation
have served as staff and volunteers
with our local Long Term Recovery Group,
Rogue Climate, Rogue Valley Manor,
and Southern Oregon Housing for All
to aid people preparing for and recovering from disasters.

2. We know there's more we could do in sheltering and feeding our neighbors if our congregation could acquire a generator to keep the heat and lights on in our building, ham radios to communicate with the resilience network, and an emergency sprinkler system so people could sleep safely in the building.

3. Four years ago, the Alameda Fire caught much of our community off-guard. We lacked shelters, effective evacuation routes through the narrow valleys of Jackson County, communications to share updated information, and food, clothes and other necessities for those who lost everything. Our fire fighters even ran out of water and had to drive back and forth to Ashland to fill tankers.

It's essential that the community have the resources and organization to share the responsibilities of preparing for and surviving the next disaster.

Thank you.

Caren Caldwell
Ashland, Oregon