

Date: 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 Laulea Miike, and I live in our state capital, Salem, Oregon. I am an undergraduate student majoring in environmental science at Willamette University. I'm taking a Climate Justice Workshop course that has inspired me to give testimony to the issues I care about. 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. I have experienced disasters fueled by extreme weather events and have seen how much community aid has supported restoration efforts, allowing these places to survive and recover during those crucial times of need.
  - a. I'm from the island community of Kaua'i, Hawai'i, which has been a victim of extreme weather in the face of climate change. Four years ago, our island experienced an unusual period of torrential rains fed by a strong low-pressure system. Days of unwavering rain soaked the soil, causing flash floods across the island, reaching homes and businesses. Roads closed, sewage from our wastewater treatment plant seeped, and we lost power. The road connecting the North Shore with the rest of the island had to be closed, and there was no way to reach that side. Community members were able to come together to set up shelters and donation stations to successfully bring food and supplies to the North Shore.

During my second semester in Salem as a freshman, Oregon was hit by the 2021 winter storm. We had 4 "snow days" at school because the roads were too dangerous from the ice to drive on. My university and the Salem area weren't in direct line of the storm, but I received news alerts of road closures, power outages, and even deaths in other counties. At the peak of power outage impacts, "more than 238,900 Oregonians were without power", and 1355 small businesses [suffered] "substantial economic losses... totaling an estimated loss of \$165,331,014", according to the Oregon Department of Energy Management's [2024 January Winter Storm Spotlight](#). During the

storm, voluntary agencies provided crucial assistance to those affected by the disaster by offering overnight stays, making medical visits, serving meals, and offering warming shelters. **Seventeen people died from the effects of this storm**— better preparation, more accessible resources, and easier access to information reduces mortality resulting from major disasters like this one.

2. BIPOC, low-income, and rural communities are most at risk for climate change-related disasters, despite contributing the least to climate change, and they must be prioritized when we decide who should receive funding. Our ability to utilize state funding for Resilience Hubs and Networks allows for continued and expedited help for those communities. More extreme weather in the form of intense rainstorms, snowstorms, droughts, and more is only growing. These events will destroy us if we continue to lack certain vital resources when disaster strikes.

So far, Resilience Hubs and Networks have 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 finance 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,  
Laulea Miike  
Salem, Oregon