

**Testimony to the House Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment
re: House Bill 3170****February 5, 2025****Jay Ward, Interim Director of Programs
Oregon Environmental Council**

Founded in 1968, the Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization. We advance innovative, collaborative and equitable solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges for today and future generations.

Representative John Lively
Chairman, House Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Lively, Vice-Chair Gamba, Vice-Chair Levy, members of the committee:

On behalf of Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) and our thousands of members throughout the state, I write in strong support of House Bill 3170 which would renew funding for Oregon's Resilience Hubs and Networks program.

Recognizing that disasters such as forest fires, floods and ice storms regularly impact Oregon communities and that 'an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure', the 2023 Oregon Legislature enacted HB 3409. This law appropriated \$10,000,000 to assist Oregon communities to prepare facilities and services to sustain their residents during incidents threatening their lives and property. Attesting to Oregonians' understandable interest in preparing for disasters, Oregon Department of Human Services received 700 applications for funding from public schools, charitable organizations, municipalities and Native American tribes—to name few. As could be expected, requests far exceeded funding and less than 10% of the applications were funded.

While ice storms and flooding devastated many communities in Oregon last year, 2024, was the sixth hottest year on record with Eugene and Salem tying records for the most consecutive days above 100 degrees. This ahistorical heat brought increased wildfire duration and intensity, forced power outages and shrouded communities in life-threatening smoke.

While debates regarding the sources of, and remedies to, climate change persist, little debate exists when it comes to the wisdom of preparation. Oregonians understand this, as evidenced by the 665 unfunded Resilience Hubs and Networks applications. While the additional \$10,000,000 included in HB 3170 will not prevent future disasters, for those who plan and prepare, the funds can and will save lives.

Oregon Environmental Council and our thousands of members throughout the state, urge you to support HB 3170.

Thank you for considering this testimony.

Sincerely,

Jay Ward
Interim Director of Programs
Oregon Environmental Council
jayw@oeonline.org