

Date: February 11, 2025

To: Natural Resources Subcommittee on Ways & Means

Subject: Support for Rental Heat Pumps & Community Heat Pump Deployment programs

Dear Co-Chair Frederick, Co-Chair Levy, and members of the committee:

My name is Greer Klepacki, and I am the Policy & Advocacy Manager with Community Energy Project (CEP). We serve some of the most impacted communities on the front lines of climate change including those experiencing low-income, seniors and people with disabilities. CEP offers free energy education, weatherization supplies, direct home repairs, and full energy retrofits, all at no cost to our community members.

Today, CEP is here in strong support of the work done by the Oregon Department of Energy and encourages you to approve their overall budget request. However, missing from this budget is funding for two vital programs ODOE runs that are lowering utility bills, improving health, and increasing resilience for Oregonians across the state.

The Building Resilience Coalition prioritizes re-investing \$30 million in the Rental Home Heat Pump Program and \$15 million in the Community Heat Pump Deployment Program for the next two years. Without additional legislative support, these vital programs risk turning away Oregonians in need or being forced to end services entirely, services that have life changing impacts on households across Oregon.

Utility bills are rising rapidly, and Oregonians from every district are feeling the stress of having to decide between rent, food, medical, or utility bills. Upgrades to energy efficiency, like heat pumps, are one of the only ways to truly lower energy bills for a household. CEP regularly installs things like heat pumps for people with disabilities, seniors and low-income Oregonians. While we are proud to serve our clients in the Portland metro area, we know that for some Oregonians, especially in rural areas, this program being considered today is often the only heat pump incentive program available to them.

As you create budgets this year, I urge you to re-invest in these programs. Thank you for your consideration.

Greer Klepacki
Policy & Advocacy Manager
Community Energy Project