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Co-Chairs Frederick and Levy, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Joel Iboa and I am the executive director of Oregon Just Transition Alliance, a movement of frontline communities facing environmental racism and climate change. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on Oregon Department of Energy's proposed budget for the next biennium.

Oregon is facing a housing crisis, and solving it requires more than just building new housing. We must also ensure that Oregonians can afford to live safely in the homes **we already have**. That means keeping utility costs low, making homes resilient to extreme weather, and ensuring that renters, low-income families, and frontline communities are not left behind.

OJTA represents over 20 frontline communities, or low-income, rural, BIPOC, and disabled folks who experience climate change first and worst. From the work that I do, I know that for many Oregonians, a heat pump isn't a luxury, **it's a lifeline**.

It means lower utility bills at a time when costs are going up. It means cooling in the summer, when extreme heat can be deadly. It means staying housed, instead of being forced out by unbearable living conditions.

If we're serious about addressing Oregon's housing crisis, we must invest in programs that help people stay in their homes safely and affordably, like the **Rental Home Heat Pump Program** and **Community Heat Pump Deployment Program**. Since they primarily serve renters and low-income households, they protect some of Oregon's most vulnerable residents.

Despite urgent need, the department's budget request **doesn't include state funding** for these critical programs. As utility bills continue to rise, too many Oregonians are being forced to choose between rent and turning on their heat during an ice storm. We cannot let that continue.

On behalf of OJTA, I urge you to reinvest **\$30 million** in the Rental Home Heat Pump Program and **\$15 million** in the Community Heat Pump Deployment Program for the next biennium. These programs help keep people safe, housed, and secure in their communities. Thank you.