

Dear Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Anderson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of SB 54: Relating to cooling for residential tenancies.

My name is Kathryn Young, and I am a resident of Ashland, OR, and a student at Southern Oregon University.

Indoor residential cooling is not a luxury anymore, it is a basic necessity. Every year, the summer heat is only increasing, especially here in Southern Oregon. It's more common than ever for this region to experience temperatures over 100°F. Alan Journet Ph.D., a co-facilitator at Southern Oregon Climate Action Now, estimated in 2022 that by the end of the 21st century, the average annual temperature in this area will be 10°F higher than in 2010, and that we will likely experience over 40 days per year of 100°F or higher temperatures. These changes are happening, and are happening quickly, and are already causing increased mortality across the state.

Heat is the most deadly natural hazard around the world, and Oregon has the third highest heat death rate in the country, only behind Arizona and Nevada. Heat deaths are massively undercounted, but in July alone last year, extreme heat killed 17 people in Oregon, disproportionately affecting elderly people. It is now our job to learn how to cope and survive with our changing world. Our housing needs to accommodate rising temperatures and keep the people of Oregon safe by including cooling systems.

Furthermore, heat pumps provide reliable heating and cooling during extreme weather events. The requirement for indoor cooling in SB 54 will significantly increase demand for heat pump programs across the state.

As you create budgets this year and consider SB 54, please re-invest \$30 million for the Rental Home Heat Pump Program and \$15 million for the Community Heat Pump Deployment Program for the next two years so that reliable cooling equipment like heat pumps can accessibly be distributed across the state. These life-changing programs are a critical, immediate need for Oregonians and without further investment from the legislature, they'll be on life support or worse in the next two years. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Young