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March 26, 2025

Senate Committee On Housing and Development
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

To: Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Anderson and Members of the Senate Committee on Housing and Development:

On behalf of Energy Trust of Oregon, thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on SB 54. This written testimony complements verbal testimony provided March 24 and accompanies a [presentation slide deck posted to OLIS](#) on March 19, 2025.

Energy Trust of Oregon does not support or oppose SB 54, and this is in accordance with Energy Trust's contract with the Oregon Public Utility Commission which prohibits Energy Trust from lobbying. We are a neutral party. The purpose of this testimony is to provide information about Energy Trust, and the support and incentives we deliver for energy-efficiency upgrades in multifamily properties, including those properties where cooling is being considered.

Energy Trust is an independent nonprofit organization funded by 2.4 million utility customers of Portland General Electric, Pacific Power, NW Natural, Cascade Natural Gas and Avista. We deliver cash incentives, information and contractor connections to support investments in cost-effective energy efficiency, small-scale renewable energy and battery storage. Our customers include homeowners and renters; multifamily property owners; large and small businesses; public facilities like schools, libraries and community centers; and farms, ranches and factories.

Since 2002, we have helped customers benefit from energy efficiency at more than 825,000 sites and install more than 30,000 small-scale renewable energy systems. Customers participating in our programs have saved \$7.2 billion on their utility bills so far. By using less energy, customers can benefit from lower utility bills and additional benefits like improved comfort, safety, health and resiliency.

As Energy Trust looks to how we can serve the energy needs of our customers now and into the future, we have identified that cooling will be a growing occurrence, including for customers and communities with a focus on climate resilience. The NW Power and Conservation Council estimates that 75% of multifamily buildings in the region will have some form of cooling by 2028. To support these customers, Energy Trust will continue to provide incentives for energy-efficient heating and cooling equipment, monitor emerging technologies, and discuss additional ways to support multifamily buildings with the Oregon Public Utility Commission.

Energy Trust incentives can be available when property owners upgrade from inefficient electric heating sources to efficient heating systems that also provide cooling capabilities,

like ductless or ducted heat pumps. We also work with community partners to provide enhanced incentives for heat pumps that serve families of color, rural customers and customers with lower incomes. While Energy Trust incentives are not currently available for window or portable air conditioning units, these are lower cost cooling options and funding may be available from other organizations.

For new construction or major retrofits of multifamily buildings, we work with building owners, architects, designers and engineers to support their development of high-performing, energy-efficient building designs. We provide support during the initial design phases, and [cash incentives](#) to offset the costs of efficient heating and cooling systems, water heating, occupancy controls, windows, insulation, and more. Our incentives can help address resident cooling needs by lowering the cost to the building owner of the installation of high-efficiency heating and cooling systems, like advanced heat pumps. These systems are designed to provide effective cooling even in warmer climates and can ensure occupant comfort while minimizing energy consumption. New construction projects we've supported with design assistance and cash incentives include [Midtown Place in Redmond](#). This is a recently built affordable multifamily building estimated to save more than \$20,000 a year in avoided utility bills due to ductless heat pumps that provide efficient heating and cooling, as well as efficient water heaters, lighting, appliances and more.

For existing multifamily properties of all types, we similarly provide technical assistance and cash incentives to help property owners lower building energy use and deliver additional benefits, like tenant comfort and safety. Multifamily property owners can receive free walk-through evaluations to identify energy-saving opportunities and receive [cash incentives](#) that lower the cost to invest in energy-efficient heating and cooling systems, insulation, windows, common-area lighting and appliances. Examples of projects we supported include [two 1970s apartment buildings in Beaverton](#) that installed efficient ductless heat pumps to replace aging equipment and provide improved comfort during extreme temperatures. Energy Trust provided \$55,000 in incentives for those systems.

Additionally, Energy Trust can support property owners in adding cooling through a state grant received from the Oregon Department of Energy, which funds air conditioning equipment in shared areas through the end of the year.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide information on Energy Trust multifamily services and incentives.

Sincerely,

Shelly Carlton
Senior Program Manager – Commercial New Construction
Energy Trust of Oregon