

April 17, 2025

To: House Committee Climate, Energy, and Environment

RE: Support for SB 830 (grants for septic repair)

Chair Lively and Vice-Chairs Gamba and Levy:

My name is Jamie Pang, and I am the Deputy Director of Programs and Policy of Oregon Just Transition Alliance (OJTA), a member-based alliance of over 20 urban and rural communities across the state of Oregon. I am also a taxpayer, property owner, and Clackamas County resident who lives on a septic system. OJTA supports SB 830 which allows for DEQ to award grants for septic system repair or replacement.

OJTA's Alliance consists of rural organizations and their members statewide- many of whom live on well water, septic systems, and other older technologies. Most of these community members are also low to moderate income, without control over their water infrastructure, water systems, or water sources. Oftentimes, forming a new connection to an available sewer, or forming a new sewer line is cost-prohibitive for any small business, or household.

As someone who also purchased a house on a septic system, I am also personally aware of how much it would cost if my septic system needed to be replaced, or if I had to connect to the sewer system on my own. Eight years ago, the main drainage pipe into my septic tank was accidentally severed by the septic company doing an inspection and maintenance. The repair, trenching of my yard, and replacement of the pipe cost about \$5,000 (it would be even more costly in 2025). I am lucky that the septic company paid for the damage because insurance policies typically do not cover septic system failures, wear and tear, or floods or accidents. Grants for families who can't even afford low-interest loans are therefore a lifeline in keeping them housed.

Oregon is facing a housing crisis, and solving it requires more than just building new housing. Rather, housing with safe and healthy systems and access to financing are part of the solution needed for Oregonians already facing environmental disparities.

I urge you to pass SB 830, which has been determined by LPRO to have a minimal fiscal impact.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jamie Pang
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