



The Climate Reality Project®

PORTLAND CHAPTER

2/10/2026

Dear Chair Sollman, Vice-Chair Brock Smith, and members of the committee,

As an organization which advocates for a just transition to clean energy, climate justice and public health, Climate Reality Project Portland Chapter writes in support SB 1588.

SB 1588 calls for a pilot program wherein Investor-Owned Utilities provide initial funds for households to adopt energy efficiency and strategic electrification through a win-win program: the household is guaranteed to save money, and the utility fully recoups their costs with reasonable interest. The energy savings more than pay for the cost of the projects.

In addition to creating long term cost savings for utility customers, this moves forward a just transition to clean energy, climate justice and public health through added local jobs, efficiency gains, and cleaner systems.

- When homes are weatherized and heat pumps are installed, households gain access to potentially life-saving cooling in summer and more affordable heating in winter. Indoor air quality is also frequently improved.
- All these technologies can reduce strain on the electric grid and pair well with virtual power plants.
- Utility purchase with customer payback opens up access to these energy and budget friendly systems for young people and others with limited access to credit.
- As Mike Powers from SEIU 503 said in the public hearing, the current situation is that many families want to weatherize their homes and switch to cleaner technologies like heat pumps and rooftop solar, but they can't afford the upfront costs. This vicious cycle leaves families paying more every month and limits job opportunities for electricians, contractors, HVAC technicians, and installers.
- SB 1588 will reduce energy burdens on families and increase the number of family sustaining jobs!

We look forward to seeing the pilot programs started by the passage of SB 1588 flourish, and a more comprehensive program built from it.

Thank you for your work on this important bill,

Helena Birecki
Interim Chair, Climate Reality Project Portland Chapter

About The Climate Reality Project, Portland Chapter

The Climate Reality Project (CRP) Portland Chapter is a local, volunteer-led chapter of The Climate Reality Project, an international nonprofit of 5 million members led by climate leader and former US Vice President Al Gore, whose mission is to catalyze global solutions to the climate crisis. Our legislative committee bases its advocacy on CRP's 5 pillars: a just transition to clean energy, zero carbon transportation, climate justice and public health, green communities, and a fair, representative democracy. climaterealitypdx.com/, www.climaterealityproject.org