

Submitter: Bryleigh O'Neil

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Environment and Natural Resources

Measure: HB4058

To members of the Committee and Staff,

I wholeheartedly support the bill HB 4058 as introduced. In order to achieve climate justice, it is imperative for low and lower-middle income households to have air conditioning or heat pumps installed for safety during extreme heat or poor air quality events. It is deeply unacceptable to have such a lack of access to adequate cooling systems and quality air when these dire situations occur. This is an emergency for many older people, disabled people, people who live in the upper levels of multifamily housing units, and those with medical problems.

I lived in Salem, Oregon in a two-story house with three other college students for the entirety of Summer 2021. We were unable to have any form of air conditioning in our house the entire time, due to lack of funds and being unable to find an AC unit in stores to purchase. During the peak of the heat wave, when temperatures reached 117 degrees Fahrenheit on June 28th, my roommates and I were absolutely desperate for any kind of relief from the heat. We went to different grocery stores and our college classrooms during the day in order to avoid the unbearable heat in our house. However, at night we had nowhere else to go. We all slept downstairs on the floor and had every fan we could find pointed at us with bowls of ice in front of them. No matter how much water we drank or how many different attempts we made to stay cool, we were still extremely worried about our physical health and safety. Most of us had intense headaches throughout the day and then some of us began feeling nauseous, lightheaded, and disoriented while in our home that night. While none of us had to go to the hospital due to heat exhaustion or heat stroke, many other Oregonians were not this lucky. 96 Oregonians lost their lives during the 2021 heat dome. This is completely devastating and there must be something done immediately!

Please fully support the bill HB 4058 and provide adequate funding to implement it in full.

Thank you so very much for the opportunity to provide comments,  
Bryleigh O'Neil