



Oregon Citizens' Utility Board

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To: House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

From: Jennifer Hill-Hart, Policy Manager-Oregon Citizens' Utility Board (CUB)

Re: Support for HB 4058

The Oregon Citizens' Utility Board (CUB) submits this written testimony in support of HB 4058. This bill will help Oregon residents access lifesaving, energy-efficient cooling and air filtration systems. CUB advocates for residential customers of utility services. We know energy utility costs can create financial hardships for households, particularly low-income, elderly, and those with disabilities. This is especially true during extreme weather events which often necessitates increased energy usage, leading to sharp increases in residential utility bills. **CUB supports HB 4058 because this legislation will help Oregon residents reduce energy costs with lifesaving energy-efficient technologies and devices.**

High efficiency heating/cooling systems, like heat pumps, can keep Oregonians safe while saving on their utility bills. Heat pumps are highly energy-efficient alternatives to furnaces and air conditioners. HB 4058 makes heat pumps more accessible to low-income Oregonians, leaving them better prepared for extreme weather events and with lower energy bills.

Heat pumps benefit rural areas, where heating options can be limited and expensive. Many rural homes rely on “bulk fuels” like wood, oil, or propane. These fuels can be very expensive. Manufactured homes often use energy intensive (and expensive) electric resistance heating. Replacing heat systems with heat pumps can cut up to 50% of a household’s electricity use.

Energy-efficient cooling and air filtration technologies help Oregon households stay safe and healthy during extreme weather events. CUB supports investing in energy efficiency because the cheapest energy dollar is the one you don’t have to spend. While saving money is important, it is not CUB’s only concern. Access to air conditioning and clean air at home can be a lifesaving measure.

Extreme weather is projected to continue to affect Oregon residents. HB 4058 shows that Oregon is prepared to keep our most vulnerable neighbors safe with energy-efficient options that maintain healthy temperature and air quality in homes while keeping utility costs low. HB 4058 will help Oregonians manage this new climate reality and directly supports Oregon families. CUB supports and urges a “yes” vote on HB 4058.