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March 17, 2023

Chair Sollman, Vice-Chair Findlay, and the other Members of the Senate Energy and Environment Committee,

Comments in Support of SB 868-871

I am writing today on behalf of Consolidated Oregon Indivisible Network (COIN) to express our enthusiastic support for the package of bills included in the Resilient Efficient Policy Package – SB 868, SB 869, SB 870, and SB 871 – along with the anticipated amendments that were referenced by Senator Lieber and Representative Marsh during the March 14 committee hearing. At the appropriate time, we also expect to support the companion bill, HB 3166, since it will promote the interagency collaboration that will be so important to help Oregon residents learn about and access new federal and existing state and incentives through a one-stop-shop.

COIN is a network of grassroots Indivisible groups located in every part of Oregon that collaborate to protect democracy and implement progressive values through voter outreach and education, campaigns, and elections, holding our elected leaders accountable, and advocating for legislation that best reflects our values.

One of COIN's committees, the Climate, Energy and Environment (CEE) Team, has been following the progress of the Joint Task Force on Resilient Efficient Buildings since its inception. We believe that four bills that emerged out of the impressive work of this task force provide an excellent first step for what will need to be a multiple step process to adequately address the building sector's contribution to the climate crisis and enhance building resiliency. As a result, COIN and CEE enthusiastically joined a broad coalition of environmental and climate advocacy, environmental justice, labor, builders, public health, affordable housing, local governments, business, and faith-based organizations and individuals that support this package of bills.

At the March 14 committee hearing, Senator Lieber and Representative Marsh did an excellent job of presenting the policy framework, the major problems each bill attempts to address, and the actual strategies and actions found in the bills to address these problems. The overwhelming support from the oral and written testimony reaffirm that they are on the right track. We appreciate that there are several amendments still to emerge; this is entirely appropriate given the complicated nature of the issues addressed and the benefits of seeking to identify common ground among multiple parties.

Climate change is the most pressing issue of our time. We know that homes and buildings are the first line of defense against climate harms, such as unprecedented heat domes and climate-fueled wildfires and smoke. We also know that homes and buildings are currently the second largest source of climate pollution in Oregon.

Indivisible groups located in some of the most vulnerable parts of Oregon confirm what many environmental justice advocates have already told this committee: while climate-related damages impact all Oregon communities, it is the frontline communities that experience the greatest harm. Therefore, we are pleased that SB 868 Healthy Heating and Cooling for All is included in this package of bills.

The Resilient Efficient Buildings Package offers a major contribution to the vital effort to address climate change, meet our energy needs in an affordable, just, and sustainable manner, and protect public health. We encourage all members of this committee to support these bills in this committee and throughout the remainder of legislative process.

Respectfully,

Jeff Hammarlund
COIN Legislative Team
COIN Climate Energy and Environment (CEE) Team