

Dear Chair Fahey, Vice-Chair Campos, and Vice-Chair Morgan and members of the Committee,

My name is Ben, I'm 16 years old, and I live in SE Portland. I strongly support HB 2842 because this past year has brought insurmountable hardships into the lives of too many Oregonians, and the coming years will only be worse due to the climate crisis. It has become evermore clear that this type of legislation needs to be passed so that people who are suffering, or on the verge of losing income or becoming ill, can have even a small bit of relief. I experienced that issues of wildfire smoke this summer, and was unable to enter half of my house without coughing or having my eyes water, and my clothes smell of smoke to this day; this was even worse for my asthmatic family members.

But we are not the only ones: 54 percent of Oregonians live in housing built before 1978. Not only is this energy inefficient, but the required upkeep of these houses is taxing on individuals and families alike. People need safe homes, they need clean air to breathe in those homes. Four years ago, Oregonians spent \$28 million on asthma-related hospital visits. Today, a respiratory pandemic is taking over peoples' air and their lives. With research showing that people who breathe polluted air are at greater risk of becoming ill with COVID-19, this bill is critical in drastically improving lives by supporting needed home improvements.

During this unprecedeted time, people need to be spending less of their income on heating and cooling. They need to have a refuge from air pollution during fires and other dangerous climatic events. They need fewer hospital visits and to live in more disaster-resilient homes. Our society needs good, local jobs and a reduced burden on the healthcare system. This bill is an incredible first step in providing all of these things.

Thank you Representative Marsh, Representative Power, and Representative Pham and others for sponsoring such progressive legislation.

Sincerely,