



www.RogueClimate.org || PO Box 1980, Phoenix, OR 97535 || 541-301-9204

Coos Bay Office: 243 S. 2nd St. Coos Bay, OR 97420 || 541-816-0758

Re: Rogue Climate Testimony regarding SB 54

Dear Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Anderson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of SB 54: Relating to cooling for residential tenancies.

Rogue Climate serves and works alongside Southern Oregon and South Coast communities most impacted by climate change, including low-income, rural, youth, and communities of color, by organizing for clean energy, sustainable jobs, and a healthy environment. We do so through leadership development, political education, and campaigns for policies that benefit our communities.

Oregon has a high rate of heat-related deaths per-population compared to other states, [ranking third](#) in heat deaths, behind Arizona and Nevada. ODOE found that [58% of Oregonians lack sufficient cooling](#) at home, and during the 2021 heat dome it was reported that [85% of heat-related deaths occurred in homes without cooling](#). Residents deserve to have access to cooling equipment during dangerous temperatures to protect against the risk of [health issues](#) or death in their own homes. Since they often don't have autonomy over the heating/cooling system in their home, renters are more likely to be burdened by heat-related risks. Heat pumps provide reliable heating and cooling during extreme weather events. It is the landlord's responsibility to ensure that renters have access to technology like heat pumps and other efficient cooling systems, especially as temperatures are becoming more and more extreme.

The requirement for indoor cooling in SB 54 will significantly increase demand for heat pump programs across the state. After advocating for the creation of the program in the legislature, Rogue Climate now participates directly as a service provider for the Community Heat Pump Deployment Program in Jackson County. We have installed heat pumps in 29 single-family homes located in designated environmental justice communities in the past five months. However, the need continues to outweigh available resources. These programs make it possible for more people to make the upgrades necessary to have reliable cooling in their homes.

As you create budgets this year and consider SB 54, please re-invest \$30 million for the Rental Home Heat Pump Program and \$15 million for the Community Heat Pump Deployment Program for the next two years so that reliable cooling equipment like heat pumps can accessibly be distributed across the state. These life-changing programs are a critical, immediate need for Oregonians and without further investment from the legislature, they'll be on life support or worse in the next two years. Thank you for your consideration.



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Sincerely,

Jess Grady-Benson, Organizing Director

Zöe Serrano, Legislative Coordinator