



Oregon Just Transition Alliance

February 7, 20223

To: Representative Maxine Dexter, Chair, and Members House Committee on Housing and Homelessness

Re: House Bill 2889

Chair Dexter, Vice-Chairs Gamba and Helfrich, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Joel Iboa, I live in Eugene, and I am the Executive Director of the Oregon Just Transition Alliance, a movement of communities facing environmental racism, climate change, and economic exploitation. We believe that no matter where we live or work, how much money we make, or our background, every Oregonian deserves a healthy, affordable, resilient home.

Over the last three years, we have faced a worldwide pandemic, wildfires unlike anything we've seen before, and an unprecedented heat wave that took the lives of more than 100 people. This doesn't take into account what we were already dealing with: air pollution, lead exposure, unsafe working conditions and other environmental risks. The truth is, while many of us have been affected, Frontline communities, including people of color, low-income families, people with disabilities, and people in rural areas are most impacted.

In 2021 our alliance and frontline community members were successful in passing three groundbreaking bills for energy justice and community resilience. Two of these community led policies were The Energy Affordability Act and The Healthy Homes Act. Both of these bills ensure that Oregonians across the state, especially families already struggling in the economic recession, would be able to reduce their energy cost through a low-income utility rate class and that money reaches the most in need with essential home repairs and retrofits.

In 2022 our members came together once again and passed several policies to continue our community resilience efforts, most notably through the passage of Emergency Heat Relief which fast tracks and funds the installment of ductless heat pumps for Oregonians in the face of record breaking heat waves. Our bills this decade have worked together to help ensure all Oregonians have what they need to thrive. We know that resilience starts at home, but we simply don't have

enough homes for everyone. Whether it be heat waves, drought, the big earthquake, ice storms, or wildfires; the place we call home is where our communities will brace for the next crisis.

Thanks to our members' work, our existing homes and the homes being built will be better than before. And that's exactly why we need to build enough for everyone.

HB2889 can be a landmark housing bill. It can create long-term structural change and accelerate housing production while improving affordability and location choice. It can make communities in every corner of our state more resilient by ensuring they have safe and affordable housing. I urge you to pass it this session.

Sincerely,

Joel Iboa
Oregon Just Transition Alliance
Executive Director