

Submitter: AE Hillenburg
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment
Measure: SB868

March 13, 2023

To: Senate Energy and Environment Committee
From: AE Hillenburg, Willamette University
Re: Healthy Heating and Cooling for All SB868 support

Dear Chair Sollman; Vice Chair Findley; and members Sen. Golden, Sen. Hayden, and Sen. Lieber of the Senate Energy and Environment Committee,

My name is AE (pronounced “eh”), and I live in Salem attending Willamette University. As a home renter I have paid incredibly high bills in natural gas utilities in order to survive freezing winters and dangerously hot summers.

I am writing to you today in support of SB 868 Healthy Heating and Cooling for All. This bill will help realign energy efficiency programs with state climate goals according to the Oregon Environmental Protection Act, set a statewide heat pump target, support workforce development, and improve navigation of federal and state incentives for energy efficiency in homes and businesses.

Energy consumption in buildings is responsible for nearly 35 percent of annual Oregon greenhouse gas emissions. Efficient, electrical heating and cooling is growing quickly in both popularity and availability. People are rapidly moving towards heat pumps, which both cool and heat homes and buildings for lower energy costs than gas furnaces, without heating up the planet. Heat pumps will keep us cozy in winter with up to 3 times lower bills than other heating sources, and cool us in the summer too. Gas is more expensive than we can afford and the costs are skyrocketing. NW Natural Gas— the largest fossil fuel company in Oregon— increased rates more than 40% in 13 months. Meanwhile, the cost of renewable electricity, like solar and wind, is falling.

I urge you to pass SB 868, along with the rest of the Building Resilience package, in the 2023 legislative session to ensure everyone in Oregon lives in a comfortable, affordable place like they deserve.

Thank you,

AE Hillenburg
Willamette University