



March 14, 2023

ZERO Coalition  
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Portland, OR, 97204  
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Senate Committee On Energy and Environment

Re: Support for the Building Resilience Policy Package, SB 868, 869, 870, and 871.

Dear Chair Sollman, Vice-Chair Findley, and members of the Committee,

My name is Ashley Haight and I live in Portland, Oregon. I'm the manager of the ZERO Coalition (ZERO). ZERO brings together the work and perspectives of architectural firms, energy efficiency organizations, construction businesses, policy advocates, manufacturers, government agencies, community organizations, environmental justice partners, and energy service providers. Together we are collaborating to help Oregon meet its climate responsibilities by taking an equity-centered approach to decarbonizing buildings in Oregon. We work to ensure that the market conditions and regulatory frameworks are in place to advance sustainability in the built environment in a way that leaves no one behind.

The ZERO Coalition supports the Resilient, Efficient Buildings policy package because homes and buildings are our first line of defense against climate harms, like extreme heat and wildfire smoke. There are real day-to-day barriers to people updating their homes to make them safer and healthier and these all must be addressed. Energy-efficient buildings keep wildfire smoke and other outdoor air pollution out while helping to regulate indoor temperatures. As the second largest—and growing—source of climate pollution in Oregon, the buildings in which we live and work are critical to achieving our climate goals. With the Resilient, Efficient Buildings policy package, we'll gain better health, lower costs, and a safer climate by increasing climate resilience, with more insulation and sturdier windows and doors, and efficient heating and cooling systems.

The Resilient Efficient Buildings policy package was developed after many months of the Resilient Efficient Buildings Task Force meeting and is excellent at addressing the above concerns. In short, these bills are:

- Healthy Heating and Cooling for All (SB 868) will align our energy efficiency programs with our state climate goals, accelerate heat pump deployment, and ramp up other energy efficiency efforts like weatherizing and retrofitting existing homes;
- Build Smart from the Start (SB 869) will update Oregon's base building code so that all new buildings are constructed to be more efficient and resilient from the start;
- Building Performance Standards (SB 870) will improve the energy efficiency of large, energy-intensive commercial buildings through the adoption of a Building Performance Standard;
- Smart State Buildings (SB 871) will help to reduce barriers for public buildings to be made more efficient and healthier.

Along with these benefits, studies have found that a new all-electric home in the Northwest can save \$4,300 over 15 years compared to a house relying on gas. This is especially important for people of color and low-income households, who are disproportionately impacted by unhealthy and inefficient housing and schools and spend up to three times as much on energy in part because they are more likely to live in older, less efficient buildings. We must prioritize helping those most harmed by climate extremes and fossil fuels. Oregon needs a lot more affordable housing, and other buildings like schools and hospitals, for our growing population. These should all be built smart from the start, healthier, and more resilient against growing climate harms. Our first step should be to stop making the problem worse. It's more affordable to build all-electric with heat pumps, and more affordable to live and work in homes and buildings that waste less energy.

The transition to clean, efficient buildings provides an opportunity to build on Oregon's existing clean energy economy and support local, family-wage jobs that can't be exported. Approximately a third of buildings in Oregon that will exist in 2050 have yet to be built. We know that cities are growing rapidly and housing is in high demand across the state, meaning that jobs constructing clean, efficient buildings will be a continuous need. At the same time, over 85% of Oregon's existing single-family residences were built prior to 2000



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(before the prevalence of energy codes), which means there is a significant need to retrofit existing buildings. Let's ensure new construction is built smart from the start and remove barriers for Oregonians who want to improve current homes and buildings to waste less energy, protect us from climate extremes, and run on clean energy.

Please vote 'Yes' on SB 868, 869, 870, and 871, and thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on these critical bills.

Sincerely,

*Ashley Haight* 03/17/2023

Ashley Haight and the following ZERO Coalition members:

350 Deschutes  
Birdsmouth  
City of Milwaukie  
City of Portland Bureau of Planning & Sustainability  
City of Tigard  
Climate Reality Project, Portland Chapter  
Climate Solutions  
Community Energy Project  
Dream Home Building and Design  
Earth Advantage  
ElectrifyPDX  
Electrify Now  
Green Hammer  
Harka Architecture  
Imagine Energy  
MacDonald-Miller Facility Solutions  
Metro Climate Action Team (MCAT)  
Multnomah County Office of Sustainability  
New Buildings Institute  
NorthWest AeroBarrier  
NW Energy Coalition



Opsis Architecture

Oregon League of Conservation Voters (OLCV)

Oregon Solar + Storage Industries Association

Passive House Northwest

SERA Architects

Sierra Club Oregon

The Environmental Center

Walsh Construction