

February 11, 2021

To: Chair Fahey, Vice Chair Campos, Vice Chair Morgan and Housing Committee Members  
Marsh, Meek, Neron, Weber and Zika

I am writing to you in support of House Bill 2842, a good idea, long overdue.

Over half of the homes in Oregon were built before 1978, most of these pre-1978 homes are energy inefficient and many of these energy inefficient homes belong to or are rented by people who cannot afford to retrofit their homes.

People living in energy inefficient homes experience more sick days and hospital visits caused by mold, cold weather, and poor air quality. This situation is even worse during a respiratory pandemic: research shows that people who breathe polluted air are at greater risk of severe cases of COVID-19.

HB 2842 is good for the people whose homes will be made more healthful and more comfortable and who will have to spend less on heating **and** it will help to decrease the burning of fossil fuels in Oregon and on the planet **and** it will create good paying jobs for the people doing the retrofitting.

I am a 72-year-old retired Physician Assistant. My wife and I, with a little sacrifice, have been able to afford to make our pre-1978 home comfortable and energy efficient. Our energy bills are very low and, though we generally wear fleece jackets in our house in the winter and barely turn on our air conditioner in the summer, our home is a comfortable, healthy living space. Probably most of you on the House Housing Committee are also able to live in healthy, comfortable, energy efficient homes. HB 2842 will make it possible for low-income Oregonians to do the same.

I urge you to pass HB 2842 out of your Housing Committee and work to get your colleagues to vote in favor of it. It is a good use of our tax dollars to make it possible for all Oregonians to live in healthy, safe, energy efficient homes.

Sincerely,

Catherine Bax, Retired Physician Assistant

Member of Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Member of St Andrew Catholic Church's Ecojustice Team