



Oregon Just Transition Alliance

February 15th, 2023

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.

The pandemic, economic uncertainty, and extreme weather events have tested and devastated Oregonians over the last 3 years.

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.

We are glad that The HB 2889 -1 amendments reference the new environmental justice mapping tool currently being developed by the environmental justice council. Climate resilience and equity strengthen the bill to ensure that there is enough housing, in the right locations, that are accessible to a variety of populations and demographics. When future homes are built they need to be built to resist, recover and adapt to adverse conditions of climate change or natural disasters. While also taking into account the existing environmental justice concerns of existing neighborhoods who've been impacted by air pollution and district redlining.

Supporting the -1 amendment ensures the state has the tools it needs to hold all parties accountable for their role in not only producing enough housing for everyone in Oregon but producing housing that is fair, just, and equitable.

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 move this critical piece of legislation to the house floor.

Sincerely,

Joel Iboa
Oregon Just Transition Alliance
Executive Director