



February 3, 2022

Senate Committee on Energy and Environment
900 Court St. NE, Room 453
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Letter in Support of SB 1518

Dear Chair Lieber, Vice-Chair Findley, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to share the City of Beaverton's strong support of SB 1518, which gives municipalities the option to adopt the Reach Code as the minimum construction standard within their jurisdictions. The Beaverton City Council recently adopted this bill as a top priority for the 2022 legislative session.

We take climate change seriously in Beaverton. In 2019, the City Council adopted the Beaverton Climate Action Plan, a framework to reduce our community's greenhouse gas emissions and protect our residents from the effects of climate change. This year the City also launched the Beaverton Climate Action Task Force, an advisory group of community members who are charged with providing recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on climate related matters.

The goals of Beaverton's Climate Action Plan, which were developed using an extensive community engagement process, include a 100% reduction in community-wide emissions by 2050 and carbon neutral city operations by 2030. It puts climate equity at the forefront by 1) recognizing that the impacts of climate change fall disproportionately on low-income populations and members of our BIPOC communities, and 2) ensuring that any action taken to address climate change reduces these disparities and benefits every person who calls Beaverton home.

The Beaverton Climate Action Plan calls for the local adoption of the more efficient Reach Code as key to mitigating the impacts of climate change. Energy consumed in buildings produces around one-third of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, falling only behind the transportation sector as the largest source of emissions. Our climate goals can't be reached without addressing the building sector's role in generating emissions, reducing energy use, and improving the efficiency of our building stock. Giving cities the option to adopt building codes that "reach" beyond the state minimum requirements will create opportunities for local governments to lead the way on clear air and climate solutions, while creating roadmaps for other local governments to follow as well.

Adoption of the Reach Code will also reduce the energy burden felt more and more frequently by households. Nationally, the lowest income households spend three times more of their income on energy costs compared to non-low-income households. In Washington County, 16% of households faced an energy burden in 2020, meaning they spent more than 6% of their income on energy. All residents – not only those who can afford to follow an optional code or third-party standard – are entitled to efficient, well-insulated housing that they can afford to heat and cool. Ensuring that buildings are constructed to a standard that allows for an efficient use of energy is a baseline first step.

There is no single solution for the issues Beaverton faces when it comes to climate change. We need as many options in our tool bag as possible, which is why we would welcome the option to have the Reach Code as the minimum construction standard in our jurisdiction.

Thank you again for the opportunity to share our support of SB 1518. Please feel welcome to contact me for additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lacey Beaty".

Lacey Beaty
Mayor