



Building Performance Standards SB 870

SB 870 would establish a Building Performance Standard for large commercial buildings to reduce their energy use and climate emissions over time.

Problem:

- Much of Oregon's commercial building space was constructed prior to adopting newer, more energy-efficient state building codes. Older buildings consume more energy and produce more carbon emissions than newer buildings, leading to higher energy bills and more pollution.
- Older buildings also face more barriers to efficiency upgrades, but are an essential opportunity for reductions if the State is going to meet its emissions targets, and for the resilience, sustainability and durability of our built environment.
- Oregon workers and others who gather in our largest buildings are at risk from increasing harms like extreme heat and wildfire smoke fueled by climate change. Older, inefficient buildings lack the protection they need.

Solution:

- Six percent of buildings represent approximately 50 percent of floor space nationally, according to the [U.S. EIA](#). Making improvements to a relatively small number of buildings can have a big impact on overall energy savings and climate pollution reduction.
- Enact a Building Performance Standard (BPS) to require large commercial buildings to meet energy and emissions reduction targets over time from a flexible menu of improvements. Modeled after [Washington State BPS](#), which passed in 2019.
- Provide long-term certainty, helping building owners plan for upgrades that improve their buildings and stimulate the local economy and create local, family-wage jobs across the state that can't be outsourced.
- Provide financial incentives and technical assistance for building owners taking early action to meet these standards before they are required to be met.

What is a Building Performance Standard?

- A building performance standard (BPS) establishes specific performance levels that existing buildings must achieve. BPS policies can be designed to target improvements in a variety of building aspects including energy use, water use, and emissions. Source: [EPA](#)

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Rebuilding Task Force Background:

Energy consumption in buildings is responsible for nearly 35 percent of annual Oregon greenhouse gas emissions. The Resilient Efficient Buildings Task Force was created in 2022 by Senate Bill 1518 to identify and evaluate policies related to building codes and building decarbonization for new and existing buildings that would enable the state to meet its greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals while maximizing additional benefits such as increasing energy efficiency, improving climate resilience, improving public health and air quality, and reducing the percentage of household income that is spent on energy costs. Co-Chairs Lieber and Marsh identified policy areas that would have significant impact on emissions reductions and community resilience. Those areas will be contained in four bills, SB 668, SB 669, SB 670 and SB 671. Legislative Counsel is still working on initial language.

Sponsors: Senator Lieber and Representative Marsh

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