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Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission

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November 3, 2016

Mayor Hales and Portland City Commissioners
Portland City Hall
1211 SW 4th Avenue
Portland, OR 97204

RE: Proposed Home Energy Score Policy

Mayor Hales and Commissioners:

I am writing to express the Planning and Sustainability Commission's support for the proposed home energy score policy on which Bureau of Planning and Sustainability staff briefed the Commission on October 11, 2016. The Commission voted 5-4 to recommend support for this policy when it comes before City Council on November 23, 2016. Please note that we did not take public testimony on this proposal, but we received written comments from interested parties and had a vigorous discussion among PSC members.

As a Commission, we are responsible for the stewardship of the City's Climate Action Plan. Requiring energy performance ratings for homes has been a high-priority action in the Climate Action Plan since 2009. A majority of the Commission endorsed the home energy score proposal as an important information policy that advances the City's goals to reduce carbon emissions from the residential sector and fills a critical gap in consumers' understanding and awareness of the full costs of owning a home.

Discussion among the Commissioners revealed some concerns about the proposal, including the suggestion to pilot and educate homeowners about home energy scores before making them mandatory; the perception that looking at past utility bills is sufficient for consumers to make decisions; and questions about whether it is the buyer or seller who is best positioned to make energy-efficiency improvements in the home as well as the difficulty of ensuring compliance for this mandatory reporting.

Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

Katherine Schultz
Chair



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