January 23, 2012

To: ETO and Interested Parties

From: Home Performance Contractors Guild of Oregon
Clean Energy Works Oregon

Re: EPS

First, we'd like to thank the Energy Trust of Oregon for its efforts to help develop and implement an energy performance score system. It's time for Oregon to join the European Union, Australia and more than a dozen other US jurisdictions in implementing an energy performance score system.

An energy performance score system will provide valuable information to consumers. The fact that 83% of participants in the Energy Trust pilot specified their interest in an energy performance score when buying real estate, demonstrates that there is a need for such a tool and that consumers are ready and willing to embrace it. Consumers familiar with other rating systems intuitively understand the value of gaining a better understanding of a property's energy efficiency before purchasing it.

The fact that consumers want data about a property's energy efficiency should not be a surprise. Utility costs are generally the third largest cost associated with owning a property behind loan servicing and property taxes. However, energy costs are actually something the consumer can control, and they should be empowered to do so by having access to tools that help them evaluate energy use.

Educating consumers about the value of energy efficiency will also help unlock the nascent market for comprehensive energy efficiency upgrades to homes, which is becoming an important engine for job creation in an otherwise bleak construction market. Clean Energy Works Oregon has demonstrated that building a market for multi-measure, comprehensive energy efficiency retrofits not only produces substantial energy savings (unlike the single measure analysis in the MetaResource Group report), but also creates jobs.

Now is not the time to make a perfect solution the enemy of a good solution. There are solid, field-tested tools available to create energy performance scores. Consumers want tools to help them understand and evaluate real estate decisions. Oregonians needs jobs now.
If the Energy Trust of Oregon is not able to implement a particular energy performance score system now, we would hope that it would endorse the implementation of this a field-tested performance score system by other market actors.

Sincerely,

Marshall Runkel, President HPCG of Oregon

Derek Smith, CEO CEWO