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Public Utility Commission
Filing Center

Energy Trust rebate based on my understanding of the PUC staff recommendations.

I am with Pyramid Heating and Cooling an HVAC contractor in the Portland Metro area. I also hold state certification as a mechanical inspector. I have worked in this industry since 1985 and seen quiet and evolution over the years. When I began in the industry we really looked at the mechanical system independently of the home. We simply wanted to create a controlled environment. Today we see the entire home as a system. It has a tremendous effect on our health and wellbeing. Together the total home also has an effect on our disposable income. It has an impact on our environment and the future resources for our kids. **I do not believe we should discontinue the rebates for insulation in gas heater homes.**

In our state the Energy Trust rebates along with the state tax credits have become endorsements for making wise purchases. When I present HVAC product to a customer I am often asked if there are tax credits and rebates. I am not asked if they are cost effective but it is clear people consider the credits to be important. Often the level of rebate is not huge compared to the cost of the work but the customer still wants to see them. I was attending a session put on by the department of Energy where tax credits were the subject. The person who processed the credits described how important a \$35 credit on a \$1000 dishwasher was to people. The feeling I got was the same I feel in the HVAC marketplace. These relatively small give backs are seen as endorsement and a reason for people to make good environmental decisions.

I understand some feel the "home performance" industry will stand by itself without the rebates. I believe that is flawed thinking. With the changes inside of Clean Energy Works and how the program has dwindled I have seen several contractors go away or change their focus. Most of the older insulation contractors are back to focusing on new construction. It has become too hard to focus on upgrading existing homes. Several contractors are simply gone. Losing these contractors is bad for our communities. It will be difficult to pull their knowledge and training back together when we encounter the next energy crunch.

I have heard the gas prices will be stable and low for the next 30 years. I have to wonder what crystal ball someone is looking into. It is a best guess. Kind of like we saw with great hope what would happen with the deregulation of electric utilities. It does not take much to disrupt the balance we have. It could be the weather, an earthquake or effects from outside our county, but it is likely we will incur disruption in our distribution system at some point. If the coal industry fails to continue to supply electric energy we will see natural gas take up the slack. Once the gas suppliers have that industry tied I speculate that the oil and gas companies shareholders will win and we will pay for it. Don't decrease the speed we move from that dependence from our energy providers.

Please act reasonably. Continue to encourage our public to act responsibly. Payback will be long term if not short term.

Sincerely

David Salholm