

Honorable Chris Edwards, Chair, Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee  
900 Court Street NE,  
Salem, Oregon 97301

June 9, 2015

Chair Edwards and Members of the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee,

I am writing to say “Thank You!” for holding this critical informational hearing and exploring ways for Oregon to mitigate climate crisis. I cannot express the incredible urgency that is needed and hope you will unanimously support HB 3470’s passage this legislative session. I am part of a group called Hair on Fire Oregon—reflecting the urgency we are feeling in Southern Oregon over our changing climate. For two winters now, we have seen virtually no snow, our springs are coming 3 weeks early, and drought and fire are wiping out our wells and our forests. We are feeling the effects of climate instability that scientists have predicted.

Since early March, I have been following HB 3470 and traveled up to Salem on April 14<sup>th</sup> to hear the expert testimony and testify myself on the urgent need for Oregon to pass legislation which would cap and then reduce greenhouse gases over time. For years Oregon has agreed that greenhouse gases need to be reduced and yet no legislation has resulted in achieving that outcome. Many of us believe we can wait no longer if we want to avoid irreversible damage and catastrophic costs to our lives and livelihoods.

The good news is that we have a great opportunity right now. HB 3470 is an incredibly well thought out solution to getting Oregon on track to reduce our impacts and contribute as a leader on climate change. HB 3470 is based on solid and proven practices currently being used in California and Quebec. These practices, according to both the expert testimony (see full transcripts of the House Energy and Environment testimony attached) and recent reports, **are working!** Not only are greenhouse gases being reduced on, or ahead of schedule, but economies are thriving.

My hope in writing to you is to encourage you to familiarize yourself with the merits of this bill. It is not a Johnny-come-lately, but rather the careful culmination of much research, observation and practice. Some of HB 3470’s key features are:

1. Requires the state environmental agency to develop and implement an action plan for meeting emission reductions based on the best available science.
2. Emission limits would apply to approximately 40 businesses in Oregon that are the largest producers of greenhouse gas emissions, targeting 85% of emissions statewide.
3. Fairly and gradually prices the emissions from these large businesses, with revenue invested in statewide conservation, renewable energy and efficiency projects.
4. Authorizes a market based incentive program creating economic incentives for early and voluntary emission reductions seen to be working successfully elsewhere.
5. Emission limits are based on ongoing research by a panel of 3000 qualified climate scientists, updated every five years.
6. Safeguards are established to protect vulnerable low income communities.

7. Would link Oregon with a regional group of western states and two Canadian provinces for greater effectiveness, forming the fifth largest economy in the world, to provide leadership for the rest of the country.
8. Creates legislation proven by seven other states to enhance job and economic growth along with emission reductions.

HB 3470 is a bill that can provide an economic boost to our state while propelling us into a leadership role to mitigate climate crisis.

According to this report produced by The Climate Trust for the legislature last year, [\*An Evaluation of Potential Carbon Pricing Mechanisms for the State of Oregon Policy Paper for the 2014 Oregon Legislature\*](#), the following chart, found on page 2, depicts the potential harm to various economic sectors in Oregon **if no** action is taken to price greenhouse gas emissions and stem the flow of greenhouse gas pollution. We can attest here in Southern Oregon, we are already experiencing “warmer, drier summers” and “reduced winter snow pack in the Cascades.”

Threat:	Leading to:	Valuation of industries affected:
Warmer, drier summers	Drought Heat waves Wildfires Disease and pest increases	Forestry: \$12.7B <sup>4</sup> Wine: \$2.7B <sup>5</sup>
Sea level rise along coast	Erosion Flooding	Coastal Real Estate: No information available
Reduced winter snowpack in the Cascades	Increased water prices Increased irrigation needs Decreased tourism	Agriculture: \$23B <sup>6</sup> Tourism: \$9.2B <sup>7</sup>
Increased ocean acidity	Algae blooms Biodiversity changes	Salmon fisheries: \$6.7M <sup>8</sup>

These impacts will be significant and costly. The report goes on to say that “**...continued worldwide inaction, could cost anywhere from 5-20% of global GDP each year to perpetuity, while action would cost only 1%.**” HB3470, creates a solid plan that contributes to a solution taking us from inaction to action.

Since HB3470 is modeled after California’s AB 32, it is relevant to look at their achievements. California’s program thus far has proven to be successful not just in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, but also in stimulating job growth. Despite fears by some that a cap and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions would stifle the economy, this has not been born out. Expert testimony by The Climate Trust Executive Director Sean Penrith stated: *“California added more jobs than any other state during the economic recovery and it has attracted \$21 billion dollars in venture capital investment, more than all the other states in this country combined, while its core clean economy grew 10 times faster than any other sector in the state. Revenues from auction have raised \$1.6 billion dollars, a significantly higher number than was expected at this point in the program.”* This testimony, and the willingness of California’s EPA Secretary Matt Rodriguez to share data with Oregon, gives us much encouragement that HB3470, and our working in conjunction with California and Quebec, could be just the shot in the

arm Oregon is looking for. It would move us away from harmful effects of Greenhouse gas pollution and toward a renewable clean energy economy that Oregonians across the state could rally behind and benefit from. **Oregon is ready for this legislation.**

For you in the legislature, the time for action is now. The planet is reeling and we will continue to feel those effects both here in Southern Oregon and across the state. As we move forward, we encourage you to see the hope that will be generated by allowing Oregonians to be pro-active and throw our backs into doing something that will help mitigate the increasing uncertainty our children and future generations are facing.

Last month I watched the [PBS film](#) made on *Our Children's Trust* and the incredible work that Mary Wood and Julia Olson are doing--all based right here in Oregon!--to simply ask, don't we have an obligation to our kids and future generations to protect the basic life support systems of the planet?

Oregon has a rich history of people willing to step up for change, from Tom McCall to Mary Wood. We ask that you heed the growing signs and act with courage to bring Oregon into the forefront and be the change the world needs.

We urge you to throw your collective weight and votes behind HB3470 and hope you will share with your colleagues the importance of passing this bill during **this legislative session**.

Thank you for your service to Oregonians. We are deeply appreciative of the work you do and thank you for your support of HB 3470.

Sincerely,

Deb Evans  
Hair on Fire Oregon  
Ashland