

Attachment 4

Qualification of Senate Bill 965 for Enactment

SB 965 will provide the earliest conversion from fossil fuels to safe energy because it is complete and will not require work by the executive branch to develop its provisions. Because its processes are simple, this bill will minimize the time required for rule-making, execution and administration than any carbon pricing bill that is being considered by the 2015 Oregon Legislature.

SB 965 will provide certainty of outcome. Because its provisions are fully-developed and its rule-making period will be short, this bill will provide minimum opportunity for fossil fuel industry and other lobbyists to delay its execution and degrade its effectiveness.

SB 965 will be much less costly to execute and administer because of its simplicity. Its income collection and distribution procedures will be similar to those, currently used by the executive branch to perform comparable functions.

SB 965 is the fairest of carbon pricing bills. It is obvious that fossil fuel producers will pass all carbon fees on to consumers by increasing fossil fuel prices. So all households will provide all of the income that any carbon-pricing bill would generate. SB 965 requires that all income, except the relatively small amount required to administer its processes, be returned as dividends, paid to “all taxpayers”. This bill must be amended to read “all households”. This will increase its fairness by including those, whose incomes are below the taxation threshold, but still must contribute to carbon-pricing income when they purchase fossil fuels.

SB 965 will provide earlier conversion from fossil fuels to safe energy than any bill being considered by Oregon legislative committees. Those, who are victims of the income and wealth gaps, are the earliest and most severely afflicted victims of the health and security effects of fossil-fuels. Therefore, they will be the greatest beneficiaries of early elimination of fossil fuel use. This compounds the fairness of SB 965 to the public.

SB 965's dividend feature provides a strong incentive to minimize fossil fuel use. Those, who are conservative users of fossil fuels, will receive more in dividend payments than the increases in their fossil fuel costs. They will earn a profit. Those, who are not conservative users, will have this profit incentive to become so. The dividend/fossil fuel cost difference will provide an incentive for users to upgrade the energy-efficiency of their vehicles and homes so as to earn a larger profit, each year. Many will install systems on their homes to produce safe-energy. These actions will hasten the day when toxic fossil-fuel exhaust will be gone and we can breath purer air, drink purer water and eat purer food.

SB 965 will create enduring climate change policy, because of its dividend feature. British Columbia has had a similar, very successful, carbon-pricing policy for seven years. As B.C. residents attest, politically-active, benefit recipients will assure that climate change policy survives changes in government. They will also prevent special interest lobbyists from diverting carbon fee income to other uses, which would critically delay or prevent the conversion to safe energy sources.

Enactment of SB 965 will quickly place the elimination of fossil fuel use on “reliable auto-pilot”. That auto-pilot consists of dividend-receiving citizens. This will enable socially-concerned citizens, such as us, to turn our full attention to the second greatest societal threat, the growing income and wealth gap.

For all of these reasons I strongly recommend that SB 965 be amended, as specified above, and enacted by the 2015 Oregon Legislature.

On June 10th the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources will conduct a hearing on SB 965 which deserves everyone's involvement.

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