

- 1) Thank you for this opportunity to speak with you today, and I thank you even more for your bold leadership in stepping up to address the climate challenge. Oregon is now front and center in developing practical strategies to address this crisis at home. For though this is indeed a global crisis, climate change presents this state with a very clear and present danger. You all can see this, and experience it with the longer, hotter summers, the higher waves and wind impacts to the coast and inland, the reduced snow pack and increasingly intense fire seasons. There is an increasing cost to Oregonians from inaction, in direct cost, property and resource loss and loss of life. As the Carbon Policy Office report on economic impact has shown, the economic—as well as well-being—impacts of enacting a carbon policy well outweigh the costs of implementation.

- 2) Oregon has a unique advantage in addressing climate change—its remarkably rich forests, farms and other natural resources as well as the people who manage them. These lands have significant capacity to turn from being the victims of climate change to key drivers of the solution. Almost 50% of the state is in forest, some of the most productive and carbon rich in the world, with the capacity to absorb vast amounts more of carbon and store it safely in trees and soils, if managed appropriately. Some 61,000 jobs are supported by forest management in the state, and it is the backbone of many rural communities. The same is true with farming, ranching and our agricultural lands, whose soils and riparian areas could store far more

carbon than they do today. Yet, climate change threatens these resources, and the economies and communities that depend on them. Climate change increases the stress on natural systems and weakens their natural resilience. As Oregon State research has shown, we can manage these forests and other lands for adaptation, restoring their natural resilience---which will also restore significant carbon stocks in both the forest and in products. Doing so will not only maintain the forest and farm economy—it will enhance its sustainability. It will also improve Oregon’s watersheds, and its wildlife habitats. Working with forests and other lands for climate has multiple, synergistic benefits: increased resilience, sequestration, reduced risks, increased jobs and increased water security.

- 3) Section 7 of HB 2020 appears to recognise this. Clauses b, c and d state that this legislation is intended to promote sequestration and mitigation, promote adaptation and resilience and also to provide assistance to help make the transition to the safer future that addressing climate change will provide. Harnessing the power of Oregon’s forests, farms and other lands to combat climate change—which are the most cost effective and near term opportunities for the state, should be central to this bill. Indeed, globally the role of forests and other lands is targeted to achieve almost 40% of the carbon reductions, and at a fraction of the costs of other approaches available. But, unlike the previous iteration of HB2020, no specific allocation of funding has been made to the natural and working lands sector. This is a missed opportunity—{for meeting goals for climate, a

Testimony of Laurie Wayburn, President, Pacific Forest Trust
Re HB 2020 2.11.2019 JCCR Hearing

sustainable economy and a safer future.} I urge you to make the specific investment in forest and other lands---and the people and communities that manage and steward them with a commensurate investment of the Climate Investment Fund to achieve at least a 37% reduction in unsafe levels of CO2 levels.

Thank you