

Co-Chair Senator Michael Dembrow  
Co-Chair Representative Karin Power  
Joint Committee on Carbon Reduction

Re: Written testimony in support of HB 2020

The passage of HB 2020 is Oregon's best opportunity to fight climate change. A cap on carbon pollution, pricing carbon pollution, and creating jobs and opportunities to usher in a fossil-free economy with inclusion of communities of color, the economically disadvantaged, and rural Oregonians are the important components of the bill.

As we Oregonians look into our future, we see a landscape which is increasingly bleak. Our summers will become smoke-filled. Our forests will be destroyed by fires if not by drought. Our winters will be warmer, wetter and less predictable, and those areas hit by past wildfires will be vulnerable to landslides. In many parts of our state, crops will fail as water sources become scarce. These are but a few of the effects of climate change.

Climate change should be fought aggressively. HB 2020 puts a necessary cap on greenhouse gas emissions and has a goal of 45% reduction from 1990 levels by 2035. Though this is adequate, the latest science supports a 55% reduction by 2035 and 100% by 2050. The faster we can reduce greenhouse gases, the greater our chances of keeping global temperatures below 1.5 C. I urge the committee to adopt the stronger targets.

On August 22, 2015, smoke from eastern WA wildfires was brought to the Portland metropolitan area by strong winds using the Columbia Gorge as a funnel. We were all advised to stay indoors since the smoke was much too prevalent and irritated eyes, throats, and lungs. Fast forward to August 14, 2018 when 8484 firefighters were combating 25 wildfires in Oregon and Washington. Summers used to be one of the best times to be in the Pacific Northwest - not anymore. Our lives have been indelibly changed.

HB 2020 is a necessary part of Oregon's future. The sooner we get it passed, the sooner we can get started.

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