

Feb, 26, 2019

TO: Members of the Joint Committee on Carbon Reduction

Thank you for your earnest efforts to address this problem.

As commercial fishermen and Oregon residents who have worked in and around the seafood industry, we know that tackling climate change and ocean acidification is vital to the future of our way of life and our communities. We urge you to act swiftly to reduce carbon pollution. In particular, we believe the legislature should quickly complete one important improvement to the cap and trade program proposed in House Bill 2020 and then pass it into law. This will allow Oregon to link arms with the dozens of nations and states that have already implemented similar programs to reduce these emissions.

We know from our own experience that the healthy waters that have given us a living are being undermined by changes in temperature and chemistry driven by carbon pollution. The scientists at OSU, NOAA and other research groups have helped us understand how much we have at stake.

Here are a few things we know now. We have seen fish stocks shifting far north of their normal waters, leaving many fishermen unable to follow and harvest them. We have seen toxic algae blooms aggravated by increasing heat and rising carbon dioxide emissions. These blooms are shutting down crab and shellfish harvests. We know that far too often now, crabs and fish pile up dead on the seafloor and the beach because our waters are being robbed of oxygen. We know that shellfish farms along the West Coast coast were nearly put out of business by ocean acidification caused by carbon emissions. We know that they narrowly survived by protecting young oysters in hatcheries with artificially buffered seawater (a measure that is not possible for the rest of the fish and shellfish in the ocean). We know that strong, adult salmon are dying before they can spawn when they swim home to Pacific Northwest rivers. We know that today's unnaturally hot, dry summers are making these rivers increasingly deadly for the salmon that have fed people in our region for thousands of years. We know that marine food webs off our coast are changing. Scientists tell us that key plankton species that feed young fish are dissolving, fraying and becoming deformed in seawater acidified by carbon pollution. In short, we know that our fisheries and communities are directly threatened by carbon pollution. It is eroding the productivity of waters that provide dinner for our families, our customers, and for billions of people around the world. This is jeopardizing our way of life. It's also jeopardizing a lot of jobs. In Oregon, the seafood industry supports more than 16,000 jobs, generates sales of nearly \$1.2 billion, according to the latest estimates from NOAA.

As currently proposed, the cap and trade plan contained in HB 2020 reflects years of careful work and bipartisan consultation. The team at Global Ocean Health tells us that this bill generally does a good job of reducing emissions (and boosting sequestration) in ways that avoid burdening communities and businesses that depend on affordable energy supplies. We appreciate that this measure could enable many fishermen to afford to "become the solution" by investing some of the carbon revenue to help them increase fuel efficiency in vessels. This helps ensure that thousands of people who need a genuine carbon solution can afford to support it.

However we believe one improvement should be included, and we endorse a specific approach to ensure that it avoids any constitutional conflict. This bill should call on legislative counsel to assess the constitutionality of allowing rebates of carbon revenues to increase fuel efficiency in cars and trucks for people who cannot just switch to transit or electric vehicles. We appreciate that electric cars and improved transit may help people in the state's major urban centers. However, the resource-dependent, rural parts of Oregon need to be able to move

seafood, crops and timber to market and haul heavy materials and equipment around to produce them.

We know this because this is what we do. All over Oregon there are people (including many of us) who need to drive heavy vehicles to get our work done. Just pushing up fuel prices won't help these folks reduce pollution. It risks provoking a backlash by tying people to the tar bucket, instead of liberating them from it. If all they get from this bill is a bigger diesel or gas bill, that will make it even harder for them to upgrade or replace the old trucks that many people in Oregon's struggling rural communities still need. These people should get access to funds so they can afford to make efficiency improvements in their vehicles to achieve emission reductions.

For this reason we support the suggestion that this measure should include a "workaround" for the fuel tax restrictions in Oregon's constitution: Specifically, the bill should authorize targeted rebates of fuel tax revenues to vehicle owners who make measurable fuel efficiency improvements and deliver commensurate emission reductions, if this approach is found to be lawful under Oregon's constitution.

Thank you for stepping up to tackle the urgent problem of carbon pollution and the challenge of designing an equitable and effective cap and trade system. We experience the impacts on the ocean and we hope to see Oregon join with other states and nations that already have linked, market-based policies to reduce carbon pollution. The future of our seafood industry and our way of life depends on it.

Sincerely,

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