

Roger A. Sabbadini, Ph.D.

Date: February 14, 2019

TO: The Joint Committee on Carbon Reduction
Via Email: jccr.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

RE: An Open Letter to Oregon Lawmakers on Climate Change and the CEJB (HB 2020)

Dear Committee:

I am a resident of Bend's HD53 and S27 with family in Bend's HD54.

I urge you to support the Clean Energy Job Bill HB 2020 that is up for consideration in this legislative session. I have read the draft bill and find it compelling and worthy of passage in the current session. Please don't let identity politics prevent its adoption.

I have been struggling to understand why the issue of climate change (CC) has become part of our identity politics. I reject the unfounded opinion that CC skeptics are uneducated or uninformed about global warming and other impacts we humans have been making on our planet since the dawn of the industrial revolution. Most CC skeptics know about the vast amounts of evidence demonstrating our impact on climate air and water pollution, greenhouse warming and resultant sea level rise. Anglers like me know it when we see our fisheries in rapid decline. Fire fighters understand it when they are faced with longer fire seasons and more frequent and intense firestorms.

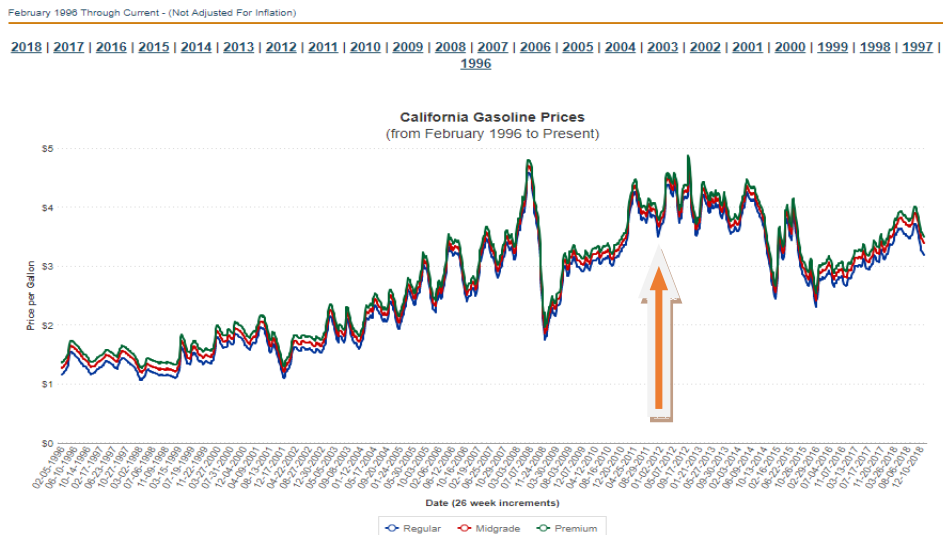
There may be several groups of CC skeptics. The first group are those who don't think it is important enough to their lives because they don't directly experience CC effects or believe the consequences are too far in the future to concern them. A second group accept the premise but believe they are personally powerless to do anything about such a daunting issue and would prefer not to think about it. The third group of CC denier, and the one that concerns me most, are those for whom climate change has become an ideological battle between those who believe in data-driven science and those who do not. For them, accepting the science of CC is to cross the forbidden political boundary and to align with a political culture or a party that is averse to theirs. To accept the data-driven premise that CC is important and in need of immediate redress would cause them to identify with the New Left, progressives, the Democratic Party and environmentalists. Some from this third group believe that CC has been exaggerated in order to advance a left-wing political agenda. Others in this group serve interests that have power and money in promoting inaction or denial or fact on CC.

Katherine Hayhoe of Texas Tech University makes these points and argues that accepting the data as something that matters is a partisan issue, not a scientific one. Dr. Hayhoe goes on to argue that, in speaking about CC with our lawmakers and friends who might take a skeptical view, we need to find common ground and a framework for a dialogue that breaks down artificial partisan barriers.

Climate change affects things we ALL hold dear such as the welfare of the family, a robust economy on which we all depend, the food we eat, the air we all breathe, our national security and the country we all love and the political stability of the world. We have failed to connect the dots between those concerns and CC. Additionally, nefarious political operatives work to disconnect the dots in advancing a political agenda that preserves their power base. Thus, CC should not be defined as a liberal, democratic, progressive issue. It is a human issue and an issue that affects all life on our precious planet.

In meeting with Representative **Jack Zika** on February 6, he expressed a concern about the effects of the bill on the local economy. In particular, he was worried that the transportation penalties might drive up the cost of gasoline and diesel on which his rural constituents depend when they drive long distances in working their farms and ranches. I pointed out to him that the *California experience showed that gas prices actually have declined since the Cap-and-Trade legislation went into full-effect in 2012*. Please see the following graph that shows this decline. Look at the prices before and after the inserted **arrow**. This data does not imply that Cap-and-Trade lowered gas prices, as there are many other factors that have greater effect at the pump, including the capacity of refineries to process crude, OPEC and US policies governing oil production affecting supply/demand, etc.

California Average Weekly Retail Gasoline Prices



(Source: https://www.energy.ca.gov/almanac/transportation_data/gasoline/retail_gasoline_prices2.html California Energy Commission)

Also, penalties for carbon pollution are not taxes. Economists generally agree that putting a price on carbon pollution is the most efficient method of transitioning to clean energy because it harnesses the market to encourage innovation. I believe that investing in clean energy will create jobs in Central Oregon to the benefit of our local economy. Jobs will be created locally rather than supporting outside fossil fuel companies.

Lower income Oregonians will benefit from these jobs and the support they will get for insulating their homes and gaining access to affordable, energy-efficient housing. Many economists argue that economically-disadvantaged folks will suffer disproportionately if climate change is not addressed.

Regardless of political affiliation, all of us want our children to be safe and to inherit a habitable planet and enjoy a strong economy. All of us love our nation and its public lands. Consequently, all of us should embrace clean energy solutions to global warming.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Sabbadini', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Roger A. Sabbadini, Ph.D.
Emeritus Professor of Biology
3174 NW Quiet River Lane
Bend, OR 97703-7549
Cell: 619-787-0570
rsabbadini@sdsu.edu