

Senator Michael Dembrow
Chair, Senate Interim Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE, Salem, OR 97301

January 31, 2020

Re: Act on Climate Change

Dear Senator,

I live in rural, coastal Oregon and I ask you to take strong action during this short session to help us slow climate change. I am on the Clatsop County Planning Commission, Arch Cape Water District Board and I am a small woodlot owner and manager. I understand our communities well and the issues facing us. And as a parent, I know we must act now, or our children and grandchildren will face even more of a crisis.

We are already seeing the negative impacts on the North Coast.

- Our \$75 M crab industry is being hurt by ocean acidification and warming oceans. A new study found that baby crabs are unable to grow their shells. Warming ocean-related, domoic acid (a toxin) increases have been delaying season opening. This is also resulting in increased razor clam closures.
- Oyster farms have to buy or grow their juvenile oysters out of the bays and ocean. Acidification now prevents them from growing in the natural environments, costing shellfish farmers money.
- In the ocean, salmon eat “sea butterflies” (pteropods), sea snails that scientists have found to be not growing shells. Our salmon and fishing industry are likely already being affected by this loss in prey.
- Our conifer trees are sick and dying from summer drought and pest outbreaks, hurting our timber.
- Houses, businesses and infrastructure are increasingly threatened by sea level rise and stronger storm events. Cities like Rockaway, Nehalem and Seaside already regularly flood from ocean events.
- The 1,000-mile-long “Blob,” a marine heatwave occurring periodically since 2014 has killed over a million seabirds on the Pacific coast, who starved as their prey were killed by lack of oxygen. These events are anticipated to increase as climate change worsens.

I know that the coast is not alone in already suffering under climate change impacts. The fires of 2017 and 2018 were a wake-up call for eastern and central Oregon, and for everyone who suffered from the smoke. I also acknowledge that low income people will likely suffer more under climate change. We need to slow the effects and give them the tools and money needed to get them out of harm’s way.

This legislative session, please help Oregon continue to be a leader by addressing climate change and passing a strong carbon pricing bill. We need a policy that makes significant, economy-wide reductions in carbon emissions that are putting all of us and wildlife at risk. I know we can do that while generating new investments in energy efficiency, restoring our forests, rivers and working lands. I know you are under immense pressure to amend the bill away from what we need to do to make a difference. Many of us in rural Oregon believe hard decisions need to be made to slow climate change before it is too late.

Sincerely,

Nadia Gardner
80285 Woodland Heights Rd
Arch Cape, Oregon 97102

CC: *Representative Tiffiny Mitchell; Senator Betsy Johnson*