

Senator Michael Dembrow
Senator Alan Olsen
Senator Lynn Findley
Senator Floyd Prozanski
Senator Arnie Roblan

February 3, 2020

RE: Testimony on SB 1530 and SB 1514

Dear Members of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources:

My name is Helen Kennedy. I live in rural Lane County. The nearest gas station is in Springfield. So, the geographic rollout proposed in 2020 SB 1530 is immaterial to us. We will be among the first to pay the carbon tax. But, more importantly, this carbon tax is minor when compared to the high and accelerating costs Oregonians are paying for in climate-related damages. In fact, it is minor when compared to the perpetual cost increases related to health care and insurance.

The longer, hotter droughts have led to expensive conditions -- more frequent wildfires, damaged crops, lower stream flows, rain instead of snow, flooding, extreme heat, high ocean temperatures and acidification. These conditions are the "new normal." They are escalating. Escalating because we are not reducing greenhouse gases in our atmosphere. Instead, based on the latest state's data (2017)¹, we are increasing carbon emissions.

The climate impacts are costing us millions of dollars, and the costs are skyrocketing -- from more asthma and heart attacks, missed work, anxiety, damaged roads and other infrastructure, damaged food supplies, and fewer recreational opportunities. And the costs keep getting higher.

Now is the time for changes to the way our government operates. Reducing greenhouse gases and the emissions thereof needs to be approached as an emergency.

I am thankful for the Senators' work on Senate Bills 1530 and 1514. But let's be honest. They take baby steps on greenhouse gases. We need huge steps. Taking baby steps now means that by 2023 we will need to be in a flat-out sprint. A very expensive sprint.

Here is what this bill needs:

1. **Implement the cap/trade and invest portions ASAP, not two-five years from now.** We passed the two-year roll out scenario in 2017. We can start with interim rules using California's rules, which gives certainty to the industry because they have been in effect for 10 years.
2. **Make the natural gas industry pay the carbon tax.** Any provisions that give high percentages or free allowances to the natural gas industry would deny the Climate Fund of much needed money. Plus they lack meaningful incentives to the wealthy natural gas industry.
3. **Prioritize long-term carbon sequestration.** Recent proposed language on carbon offsets in Section 26 2(b) (the language about no temporary or permanent reduction in "wood fiber"

¹ A government employee claims recent data is on the DEQ website. After searching for 10 minutes, I gave up.

production) would completely eliminate the benefits of forest sequestration offsets. Delete it and replace it with incentives for sequestration on all lands, not just “working lands” as defined in the bill.

4. **The Climate Fund should support home-hardening and defensible space near homes** like mine, which is 100 yards from BLM forest. The massive funding in SB 1514 of thinning and controlled burns in remote areas is ludicrous because it (1) will not protect any homes or businesses, (2) increases carbon emissions, and (3) has little chance of actually affecting any one wildfire.
5. **Make reducing greenhouse gas emissions a priority for every state agency.**² Why? Because this is an emergency and business as usual does not apply. It should be on par with health epidemics like the coronavirus, fires, floods, and other traditional emergencies. The lack of priority is the reason little has been done to date. Setting the priority is vital to being effective.
6. **Require the GHG Emissions Board and agencies to do economic costs/benefits/savings analysis for all rules, recommendations, etc. in Sec 102.** For too long the agencies have been forced to put everything else first and not provided the Global Warming Commission with the economic cost/benefit analysis in Sec 102(3)(b). Simple wordsmithing in this bill can remedy this.
7. **Under Section 102, prioritize the Board and all agencies to educate the public on ways to reduce emissions and adapt,** such as buy local food and products, drive less, and prepare for extreme weather events.
8. **The Bill needs new provisions on monitoring and accountability.** It should require both the GHG Reduction Board and all agencies to monitor GHG targets and account for their actions.
9. **Require the Revenue Officer’s economic report, Sec 93, to include the savings and benefits of reduced greenhouse gas emissions.** Otherwise, it is fatally flawed and useless.
10. **Continue the Global Warming Commission with funds for a year to complete work and meaningfully transition duties to the GHG Emissions Reduction Board.**

Thank you,

/s/

Helen Kennedy

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C: Senator Lee Beyer

Representative Marty Wilde

Chair, House Committee on Energy and Environment

Governor Kate Brown

² In January, the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission considered new regulations on climate emergency policy. https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/20/01_Jan/D/Attachment%202_Original%20Draft%20OARs.pdf The Legislature should save time and money by putting climate emergency priority language in SB 1530.

