

Hello, and thanks for reading this testimony in support of SB1530.

I consider myself a diehard capitalist, so you may find my support of this bill surprising. Worldwide we are facing the results of extracting from nature faster than nature can replenish itself. There is no other possibility but the massive collapse of ecosystems if we continue as we have. This would lead to the loss of much of the beauty of nature, starvation and probably war. This is not overstating the case, environmental change on this scale happens slowly and it's historically hard to see on the scale of a single lifetime. Climate change is happening fast enough that we can actually see it over the last decade, and that is rightfully scaring people who are paying attention.

I read that about half the value of everything we make comes from nature for free. The fact that we don't value these gifts *legally* means that the prices we see don't reflect the environmental cost of the various choices. That is where we can make the market work for the environment. Many people are becoming convinced that capitalism itself is the problem, particularly young folks. There is an increasing sense of hopelessness spreading, and seeing inaction and obstruction coming from our "leadership" is a root of this. Saving the environment is now the world war of our time and we will be remembered for what we do and fail to do now. Climate change is a first issue and initial legislation on it is a wedge to start change in the right direction.

There are many many solutions to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and sequestering carbon, which will add up to success. See the famous "Drawdown Project" and book for well researched examples. Economics is the main common thread in how successful they will be. If the markets see the prices reflect greenhouse gas emissions or reductions, free enterprise will make solutions happen without governments needing to dictate how and what. But only at the legal level can the condition of the air we depend on be given a dollar value. Thus it falls on legislature to make that happen. Incidentally, I don't consider myself either a Democrat or a Republican. I get the sense many people have similar views.

Oregon can lead in the effort or it can be forced to follow. By leading, Oregonians can have more control of the outcome for us locally and more respect nationwide, and even profit from related business. SB1530 is a good bill which goes after some of the more practical points where GHG emissions can be reduced first. It takes care to protect rural areas from unfair burden and concentrates on the urban emissions, then invests in solutions.

No bill on this issue can be complete because the vast scale of the changes coming. Passing this bill won't prevent further refinement and would engage us in the nationwide effort.

Lastly, I'm a physicist and engineer, so I think in terms of technological solutions. Talking about technical change someone said rightly that we tend to overestimate what can be done in the near term and underestimate what can be done in the long term. So what seems like a slow, fruitless struggle at first eventually snowballs into an avalanche of success. But nobody can sustain an effort without the economics to support it. Please pass this bill and keep up the good work!

-Philip Witham,  
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