



Testimony in support of SB 1530

February 6, 2020

Dear Chair Dembrow and Members of the Committee:

My name is Laura Jean and I am submitting testimony on behalf of Cultivate Oregon, a grassroots non-profit organization, which is active in regenerative agriculture issues, including protections for Oregon's specialty seed industry.

I strongly support SB 1530, which will put a cap and price on greenhouse gas emissions in Oregon and invest in solutions—including those found on Oregon farms.

The bill provides funding for projects that reduce and sequester greenhouse gas emissions and promote adaptation and resilience in the face of climate change. A portion of the Climate Investments Fund will be available for projects on natural and working lands, including agriculture and rangelands that: reduce greenhouse gas emissions, support carbon sequestration, or support adaptation or resiliency. These grant programs could fund practices that sequester carbon in the soil such as: regenerative agriculture, organic practices, cover crops, and compost application. The grants could also fund purchases of energy efficient equipment and renewables such as installation of more efficient irrigation, and generation of solar energy.

Climate-friendly agricultural practices can improve soil health and productivity while drawing down CO2 from the atmosphere. The Clean Energy Jobs bill recognizes that farms are an important part of the solution to the problem of a changing climate and provides great opportunities for Oregon's farmers to take part and benefit from the program.

The Clean Energy Jobs bill provides funding for projects that reduce and sequester greenhouse gas emissions and promote adaptation and resilience in the face of climate change. Farmers may benefit in two ways:

- 1) from **grant funds** to adopt/maintain climate-friendly practices
- 2) from selling **offset credits** to regulated parties.

After decades of lavish, unsustainable subsidies for chemical intensive commodity crop systems, including genetically-engineered crops like corn, soy, and sugar beets which have given us high fructose corn syrup and hydrogenated soybean oil, and staples of nutrient-deficient processed food, it is exciting that farmers who produce varied vegetable and seed crops are being given incentives to farm in ways that fight climate change.

Oregon is one of the top five seed growing regions in the world and we have the unique capacity to meet the need for diverse, vegetable seed crops, including the fast-growing demand for organic seed. Arguably, organic, regenerative farming methods can sequester more carbon than chemical-intensive commodity crops, including genetically engineered (GE) crops. Oregon has the ability to champion not only our specialty seed industry, but also agriculture methods that help combat a changing climate.

Oregon is one of the last U.S. regions where crops aren't widely genetically contaminated—which has allowed the state to become a leader in high-quality vegetable and specialty seed crops, as well as wheat and alfalfa. These industries can benefit and grow from the opportunities provided in SB 1530.

Over 250 farms and other agriculture stakeholders in Oregon have signed on in support of the Clean Energy Jobs bill. We want to see strong climate policy and that recognize that Oregon agriculture can and should be part of the solution.

Most sincerely,

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