

Testimony to the House Committee on Rules

February 19, 2020

Hogan M. Sherrow, Ph.D.

Director, Rural Oregon Climate Political Action Committee

Board Member, Southern Oregon Climate Action Now

Climate Leader, Climate Reality Project

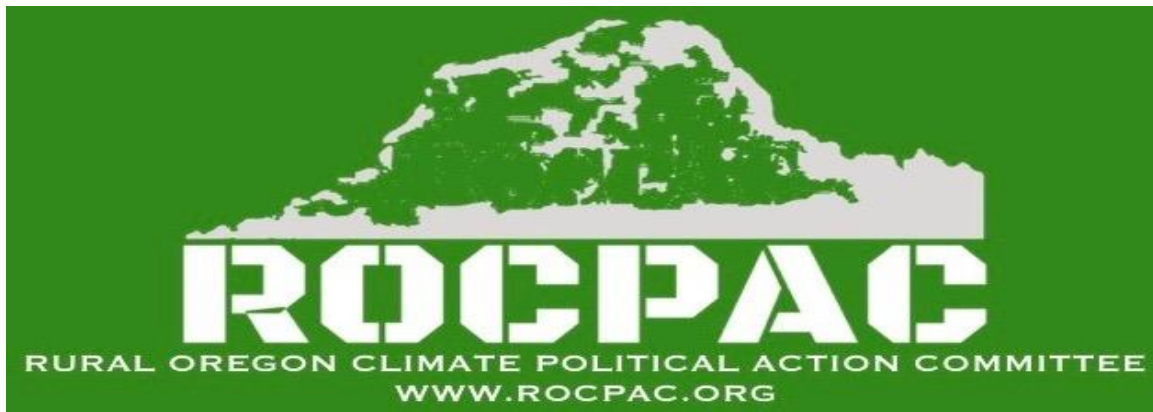
Introduction

- Director of Rural Oregon Climate Political Action Committee, a grassroots political action committee established to provide a voice for rural Oregonians advocating for climate legislation at the state and local levels.
- Board Member of Southern Oregon Climate Action Now, with 5 years experience with the organization.
- Climate Leader with the Climate Reality Project, trained in 2012.
- Former research scientist, having studied the impacts of climate change on ecologies, humans, and animals for over ten years.
- Father of two.

Support for House Bill 4167

Chair Holvey, Vice Chair Drazan, and members of the House Committee on Rules:

Thank you for considering my testimony on this important legislation. My name is Hogan Sherrow, and I am Director of the Rural Oregon Climate Political Action Committee (ROCPAC). ROCPAC is a statewide, grassroots coalition dedicated to providing a voice for rural Oregonians who want to see climate legislation at the state and local levels. I am also a Board Member of Southern Oregon Climate Action Now (SOCAN), a Climate Leader with the Climate Reality Project, and a father of two. I am also an avid outdoorsman, spending as much time as possible enjoying the natural wonders of Oregon, from hiking the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, to rafting and fishing the Rogue River, to hunting the forests of our region, to camping on the coast with my daughters. My parents moved our family to Oregon in 1982. My dad was a farmer and my mom an appointment secretary, and they taught me to embrace, respect, and protect our environment – a tradition I am working to pass on to my daughters, and one of the reasons I am supportive of HB 4167.



By passing the strongest version possible of HB 4167, and addressing the impacts of climate change at the state level, you have an opportunity to show our friends, neighbors, and children how to care for our environment, while providing the vision needed to move Oregon into the 21st century as a leader in a sustainable, green economy. This legislation is historic in nature, and by supporting it, you will be positioning yourselves on the right side of history, and demonstrating to all of Oregon the leadership qualities you were elected for. The facts have been compiled, and the results are in; HB 4167 will help Oregon address our part in climate change, and join a coalition of western states and British Columbia, who already have similar systems in place. As a result, we will be environmentally healthier, and economically stronger.

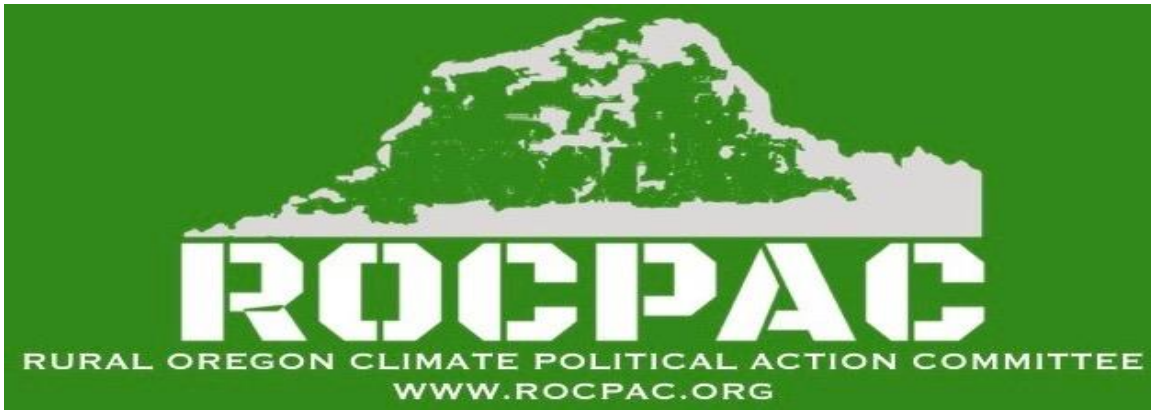
One of the most disappointing things I have observed over the past few years of my involvement in this process is the disinformation that has been spread. Contrary to what opponents of this bill claim, climate change science is not “fuzzy”. The world’s scientific experts are in agreement, this is not a debatable issue, anthropogenic climate change is happening.

- According the IPCC, climate change is accelerating at rates that were not predicted by previous models, and we have less than 10 years to avoid the most catastrophic of its consequences¹.

Despite what we heard during the hearing, HB 4167 would not result in an economic crisis, or a massive spike in energy costs.

- The Gross Domestic Product of California (overall and per capita) has risen while greenhouse gas emissions (overall and per capita) have fallen².
- Meanwhile, the cap and trade states of the Eastern Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) were 4.3% ahead of surrounding states on economic growth and 15% better in emissions reductions³.
- When California’s cap and trade law went into effect in 2012, gasoline prices fell⁴.
- In the RGGI, electricity prices have fallen 6% since cap and trade was introduced. Meanwhile, prices have risen 6% in other states, so the net price benefit for the cap and trade policy is -12%³.

This is not a financial scam to line the pockets of politicians in Salem and take money from rural communities.



- HB 4167 demands that all revenue expenditures serve the goals of the Climate Action Program in reducing emissions or capturing and storing greenhouse gases already in the atmosphere.

Decisions will not be made in a secret backroom with little or no input from impacted individuals and communities.

- The program and its administration would be supervised by a House and Senate legislative committee making it accountable to our elected representatives, and by extension the citizens of Oregon, not unelected bureaucrats.

We stand at a climate crossroads as a state, a nation, and a planet. Will we take the bold action needed to meet this challenge and ensure a future for our children and grandchildren? Or, will we allow misinformation, fear, and political paralysis to dominate our actions, and our children and grandchildren to an uncertain future where smoke from wildfires is the least of their problems?

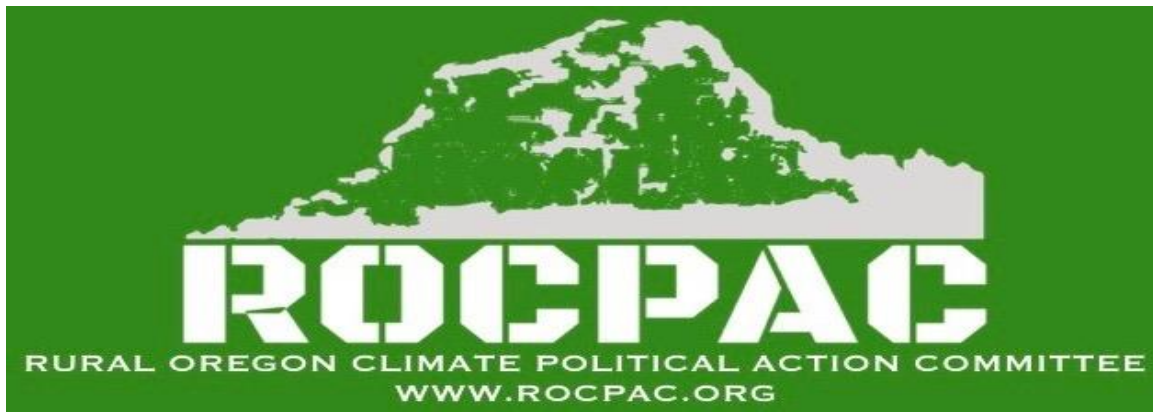
You have the opportunity to demonstrate true, visionary leadership by passing the strongest version of HB 4167 possible, and to demonstrate to our state and the nation that we can reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, while providing the resources needed for an economic revolution in rural Oregon, and across the state. HB 4167 can be the foundation for a revolution where 21st century jobs in sustainable energy provide an equitable and bright future for the communities who need it most. Thank you for your time and your leadership.

Sincerely,

Hogan M. Sherrow, Ph.D.

Director

Rural Oregon Climate Political Action Committee



Sources

1. Global Warming of 1.5C. 2018. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Special Report. <http://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>
2. California's Greenhouse Gas reductions and economic progress graph. https://www.energy.ca.gov/renewables/tracking_progress/documents/Greenhouse_Gas_Emissions_Reductions.pdf
3. Outpacing the Nation: RGGI's environmental and economic success, the Acadia Center, 2017. http://acadiacenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Acadia-Center_RGGI-Report_Outpacing-the-Nation.pdf
4. California Average Weekly Retail Gasoline Prices 1996-2018. https://www.energy.ca.gov/almanac/transportation_data/gasoline/retail_gasoline_prices2.html