

February 20, 2020

To: House Committee on Rules

RE: Support for HB 4167

Chair Holvey, Vice Chairs Drazan, Smith Warner and Committee,

For the record my name is Lee Mercer and I reside in Silverton. I am a member of Sustainable Silverton, a group working with our city council to address sustainability issues. I am also on the Executive Team the statewide small business group Main Street Alliance of Oregon. My wife, Laurie Chadwick, and I, are here in support of HB 4167 to begin to do our part in Oregon to address the climate change crisis.

Laurie and I returned recently from a trip to Vietnam and Cambodia, where we travelled by boat up the Mekong Delta from Ho Chi Minh City into Cambodia. Travelling in these beautiful countries we reflected on the pain they have suffered in the last half century and were impressed and inspired by the resilience of the Vietnamese and the Cambodian people.



But, in regards to legislation to deal with climate change, with all respect to the Timber Unity folks and the inconvenience and costs they fear from higher fuel prices, the inhabitants of the planet, and of areas like the Mekong Delta, have much more to fear from climate change.

Vietnam, largely in the Delta, is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest rice exporter and the 5<sup>th</sup> largest rice producer in the world. They are virtually the rice bowl of Asia, feeding millions of people world-wide.

But Climate change is beginning to have dramatic effects on the delta. Overflooding of Vietnam's rice fields in recent years have raised salt-water content. In 2013 farmers had entire crops destroyed sending many into poverty. In 2015 drought due to low levels of fresh water destroyed entire crop systems. Over the past 10 years 1.7 million people have emigrated out of the Mekong Delta. And its role as the rice bowl of Asia, is being threatened.



We returned to the US to witness flooding from Eastern Oregon to Mississippi as more effects of climate change closer to home.

We as Oregonians, and as good citizens of earth, need to get serious and deal boldly to address the climate change crisis, by passing bills like HB 4167, before it is literally too late for our collective survival.

Thanks for your time and consideration in this critical matter.

Lee Mercer and Laurie Chadwick, Silverton