5 March 2021

Before the Oregon House Committee on Energy and the Environment,

TO: Chair Marsh, Vice-Chairs Helm and Smith, and Members of the House Committee on Energy and the Environment,

SUBJECT: 2021 HB 2488 —Equity and Climate in Land Use, Endorsement and Improvement

Although more of an urban resident (Multnomah Co.) than a rural one, I believe Portland has a poor future without productive policy for transportation, agriculture and timber. For this reason, I totally appreciate and support 2021 HB 2488, Equity and Climate in Land Use.

1. Multnomah Co. encompasses considerable forest assets in west and east county regions. https://multco.us/file/55863/download
   With less dependence on the harvest economy, the value of forested areas for recreation, watershed, air quality and climate resilience for urban living is self-evident. Preservation of urban values compliments rural needs.
2. Transportation policy is subject to land use goals, while accounting for 40% of Oregon carbon emissions and currently, while for the last 30 years, ODOT has no mitigation plans that would cut any of the 24.5 mmT CO2e from the Transport sector, nor for the next 5 or years.
3. These emissions dominate Oregon's environmental and climate imbalances, and the root cause connection between Greenhouse Gas emissions and recent state-wide wild fires, highway infrastructure losses, and agriculturally damaging weather events cannot be scientifically denied except by legislators unjustifiably hostile to science itself and its 300 year history of serving the interests of human civilization and longevity.

Even so, HB 2488 needs improvement.

A. Renewed attention to climate justice in land use is way overdue. The emergence of flawed climate policies and false climate actions will only get worse as misguided monetary strategies ignore the climate crisis that undercuts Oregon's economy.
B. In the absence of any state policy serving to distinguish scientifically effective climate solutions from those that cannot possibly succeed on time means that the latter investments can actually preclude environmental justice and equitable outcomes. This is where STEM skills meet our civic crisis. The question to ask is, how can equitable climate justice be attained without a test establish which solutions are viable? Example: If a policy or solution cannot be determined to actually reduce or displace emissions of pollutants in Oregon, expressed in "mmt CO2e/year," it is a counterproductive distraction. Unfortunately, such policies though well intentioned abound. Oregon emissions are not in decline. Can you find any legislation rated in terms of reduced mmt CO2e/year? If not, justice goes begging.
C. Land use policy must encompass best available science and best practice in energy efficiency, carbon emissions reduction, natural sequestration and economically viable alternatives to natural sequestration.
D. Emissions from the rural environment are directly shaped by societal factors, including regulations and policies governing land use, technologies such as transportation, and indirect factors such as demands for energy, goods and services produced outside city boundaries. New land use goals must preclude agricultural practices that concentrate pollutants like anerobic methane that is then captured as if credit for artificial pollutant generation is deserved or even needed.

In Oregon we have seen our share of 500,000 losses from rampant illness. We know the policies that, had they been honored early, would have made so many of the early losses unnecessary. The analogy with land use policy is strong. We know the root cause of pollution, we know its inexorable, relentless accumulation, we know the compelling significance of land use decisions, and we know justice must be served by demonstrable and sound science. This bill is the right answer and needs more attention to make it effective as stand-alone statewide guidance for just, survival-worthy climate solutions.

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About Better Energy, LLC
Established as an open forum for Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) devoted to enriching the discussion of actionable climate solutions, early focus for web content consisted of the feasibility of drive-in, drive-out shop conversion of medium-duty diesel trucks to battery electric drive trains. Zero emission trucks. This project terminated in mid-2014 with the drop in diesel pricing that essentially cut the avoided cost factor that motivated the design effort. Since then, postings offer source material for those seeking better energy decisions that avoid life cycle carbon emissions. Not the best, just better.