

March 25, 2021

Sen. Lee Beyer
Chair, Senate Committee on Energy and Environment
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Sen. Beyer,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide public testimony on SB 541. Cascade Policy Institute is a nonpartisan, nonprofit research and education organization, incorporated in 1991. We have extensive experience analyzing environment and energy policy.

Cascade Policy supports SB 541. Oregon's landscape is covered in forests and waterways, both of which sequester carbon from the atmosphere. By not considering carbon sequestration in the calculation to determine the progress Oregon is making towards greenhouse gas reduction goals, officials are making consequential decisions based on only part of the total picture.

According to the [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#), land areas can act as a sink by absorbing carbon from the atmosphere. In fact, since 1990, EPA found that managed forests and other lands are a net sink, meaning they **absorb more carbon dioxide than they produce**.

EPA lists the primary sources of greenhouse gas emissions in the U.S. as: transportation, electricity production, industry, commercial and residential, agriculture, and land use and forestry. All these sources are considered in Oregon's calculation of greenhouse gas emissions **except** for carbon sequestration on Oregon's lands, the one source that likely offsets other emissions. Nationally, this offset is a significant amount: EPA's 1990-2018 *Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks* estimates that land use and forestry offsets around 12% of greenhouse gas emissions.

Oregon can easily utilize carbon sequestration equations already used by participants in the carbon offset market to discover how much carbon dioxide is sequestered by our forests. EPA also lists their methodology for calculating carbon stocks for various land types in their *Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks* reports. A draft of the most recent report, [1990-2019](#), was recently released and the final report will be published in April.

If the Legislature is committed to providing Oregonians with accurate information regarding greenhouse gas emissions, then carbon sequestration should be included in that calculation.

Sincerely,

John A. Charles, Jr.
President & CEO