

Southern Oregon Climate Action Now

SOCAN

Confronting Climate Change

<https://socan.eco>

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Co-Chairs, Johnson, Steiner Hayward and Rayfield and members of the Joint Committee on Ways and means:

I write on behalf of the 1500+ rural Southern Oregonians in Oregon Congressional District 2 who are Southern Oregon Climate Action Now (SOCAN - <https://socan.eco>) to offer public testimony on SB5555 regarding the state Budget and the use of funds from the American Rescue Plan. As we begin to emerge from the covid crisis, we have an opportunity to do more than just recover the economy, we have an opportunity to reflect on the economy as previously constituted and consider how we can 'Build Back Better.' As we recover and rebuild better, it is important to remember two other crises that we can employ federal funds to help us address.

The first crisis we face, the climate crisis, poses an existential threat to all of us and life on the planet as we know it. The climate crisis is driven by our excessive use of fossil fuels and the emissions of greenhouse gases resulting from this and other human activities. If we do not collectively address this crisis, the evidence tells us clearly that we have a high probability of inducing climate chaos of such proportions that life as we know it will be compromised. The likelihood is that our natural systems, our forestry, our agriculture, and our fisheries will be decimated, potentially within a century. While science doubters and deniers argue that we cannot afford to address this problem by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and promoting carbon sequestration in our natural and working lands, the reality is that we cannot afford not to address it. The consequence of our failure to act will likely be felt profoundly by our children and grand-children who will struggle simply to survive.

The second crisis we face is that of social justice. For far too long, our society has been tainted by the reality that some communities and individuals are treated with prejudice. It is beyond time that collectively we address this reality and initiate efforts to remedy the injustices that disadvantaged communities and discriminated individuals experience. As we build back, let us reflect on how we can correct the injustices imposed on our fellow Americans and do what we can to overcome those injustices.

Fortunately, although the Oregon legislature has failed to establish a program that would address these crises, Governor Brown's Executive Order 20-04 from March 2020 established the Oregon Climate Action Plan. This Executive Order was designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote carbon sequestration in our natural and working lands while simultaneously targeting social injustice. We therefore urge the legislature to incorporate into their consideration of how federal American Rescue Funds can be usefully expended in the state, the extent to which support for the Oregon Climate Action Plan is possible, and use those funds to promote whatever aspects of that proposal are possible.

I urge upon our legislators as you consider Oregon's budget and ways to use American Rescue Plan funds to invest to the greatest extent possible in addressing the two crises enumerated above. This is undoubtedly the best way to move Oregon forward.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alan R.P. Journet". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "A".

Alan R.P. Journet Ph.D.