

Dear Co-Chairs Johnson, Steiner Hayward and Rayfield, and members of the committee,

I am a Lane County, OR resident, writing in support of rethinking how we plan for the future in our state. In deciding how to use federal funding from the American Rescue Plan Act, please prioritize full funding for our state natural resource, environmental, and health agencies to support family-wage green jobs, protect public health, and reduce harmful climate pollution.

As I see the mismanagement of our beautiful and carbon rich forest, plundered not just by fire but by those sent to restore and make safe the land, I think that we are stuck in an age old way of thinking; we still think of Oregon as a timber barron would think--get wood out quick, make money, pay stockholders, promise jobs while the forests last, and leave the forest in a whatever condition the economy dictates. I urge you to seize the opportunity to rebuild a more resilient Oregon for all, by supporting funding opportunities that promote equitable job growth and health outcomes, lift up workers and frontline communities, and help mitigate climate impacts by supporting a transition to a clean energy economy. I really do believe that by trying to pacify our rural economy by promising little decrease in logging, we are postponing the inevitable and doing those workers a severe disservice. Please start immediately to create sustainable industries--conservation, recreation, restoration, etc--that will support our rural families for the long run.

As you shape the legislative budget for the 2021 - 2023 biennium, I ask that you fully fund agencies working to meet our state's climate and equity goals. By providing funding for programs that reduce emissions, invest in clean energy jobs, and promote climate -friendly infrastructure, you will support an equitable and stable economic recovery that improves public health outcomes and benefits families and working people.

That includes funding to:

Make our forests part of the climate solution by banning cutting middle and old growth on private and public land.

Fully fund all the program areas for the Governor's Climate Executive Order, also known as the Oregon Climate Action Plan (OCAP) Support transportation electrification and equitable, climate-smart transportation planning at the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) and Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT).

Implement greenhouse gas reduction programs currently underway at the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), including the Climate Protection Program and the Statewide Transportation Strategy.

Invest in environmental justice land use planning that ensures state climate work advances equity-driven solutions.

Promote climate mitigation policies that provide public health co-benefits.

Commit to equitable outcomes and environmental justice by funding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion staff in a number of natural resource agencies.

Thank you for caring for the future.

Teresa Mueller