

To: House Committee on Energy and the Environment
From: Don Merrick, resident of Tigard

I urge you to pass House Bill 2479 to Curb Black Carbon Emissions.

Decades ago the US Environmental Protection Agency has listed peer reviewed studies indicating that fine particles, including black carbon, pose a serious public health problem. Due to their small size, fine particles can penetrate deep into the lungs. Exposures to fine particles can cause premature death and harmful effects on the cardiovascular system, the heart, blood, and blood vessels.

Fine particle exposure also is linked to a variety of other public health problems, including respiratory diseases. The people most at risk include people with heart or lung disease, older adults, children, and people of lower socioeconomic status. Exposure are linked to 130,000-320,000 premature deaths in the U.S. in 2005.

Black carbon is identified by the United Nations International Panel on Climate Change and the U.S. EPA as a significant contributor to climate change. Depending on the calculation methodology, it may be either the second or third largest anthropogenic contributor to climate change behind carbon dioxide.

The state of Oregon has adopted many significant strategies to mitigate climate change caused by carbon dioxide and other associated greenhouse gases, including maintaining an inventory of sources and volumes of emissions. HB 2479 is needed because none of this effort acknowledges the role of black carbon.