Natural Climate Solutions Bill Senate Bill 530
(Written Testimony – May 24, 2023)

Jeanne Carver, Imperial Stock Ranch / Shaniko Wool Company
Testimony in favor of funding SB 530.

Landscape Photo
Chair Golden and Committee Members – thank you for the opportunity to speak with you.

My name is Jeanne Carver. My family's ranch is the Imperial Stock Ranch in north central Oregon, and this is our 152nd year of continuous operation. I'm also the Founder and President of Shaniko Wool Company.

I want to state that we absolutely can make an impact on ranching in a way that increases carbon capture and reduces GHG emissions totals. That we are seeing, and now importantly – measuring -- those "wins" for the land, which is a win for us all.

Since 1989, we've been operating under a Conservation Management Plan to improve our lands. We developed that plan with our local natural resource agency partners, and work closely with them on stewardship of soil, water and grasslands.

Up until recently, we had only our observations, yield data and species counts, plus agency testimony, to help tell us if we were making improvements to the health of the land. (next slide)

Wood Gulch Photo
With increasing concern over the environmental and climate impacts of ranching practices, in 2020, I launched our Shaniko Wool Carbon Initiative, working with a team of scientists from OSU.

The purpose is to determine the net carbon and GHG budgets of each ranching operation, using carbon as one key performance indicator, plus collateral benefits.

There are 10 ranches in the Shaniko Wool farm group now, and we collectively graze 2.6 million acres.

With the training, support and technical assistance of our agency partners, we've been doing things that the Natural Climate Solutions Bill will further advance. (next slide)

Fencing Photo

We're doing a host of climate-smart practices like better grazing management with fencing – which also helps protect riparian corridors and stream vegetation. (next slide)

Herded Grazing Photo

Herded grazing and strategic placement of salt and mineral supplements all contribute to designed utilization of plant communities. (next slide)

Sediment Catch Basin Photos (2) + Spring Development

Off stream water developments like these sediment catch basins I'm showing you, that capture and store natural run-off, (next slide)
then safely release it, recharging whole systems – especially in semi-arid environments like much of Oregon east of the Cascades. (next slide)
And spring developments high in drainages, which supply wildlife up high while protecting the source of the water. (next slide)

No Till Farming Photo

Converting to minimum and no till farming practices to eliminate erosion and build soil even in dry land operations where we do no irrigating. (next slide)

Grazing Crop Residue Photo

Grazing livestock across all crop land to manage residue, spread nutrients back to the soil, and many other positive impacts they make – reducing the need for field burning or trips over the fields w/ chemical applications. (next slide)

Targeted Grazing Photo

And many targeted grazing applications.

Carbon Sampling Photos (2)

But since early 2020, we've been measuring key indicators of our impacts. (next slide)
We're measuring across the whole 2.6 million acres, attempting to bring documentation in support of our ranching operations, (next slide)
and proving the response of climate smart and regenerative practices.

Measured Carbon Graph

With 3 years of verified data here are preliminary results: (next slide)

- On our high desert semi-arid Oregon ranch, we banked 60,000 tons of soil organic carbon each of the last 3 years – NET. We did this while delivering beef, lamb, wool, grains and hay in support of the human community.
- We are drawing down more than 218,000 tons of CO2 from the atmosphere and storing it in our soils and grazing lands each year – on a NET basis. (next slide)

GHG Emissions Graph

- Yes, livestock emit methane, but when you look at their combined total impact, our GHG emissions are a NET negative, and we've reduced that by another almost 9,000 tons each year.

This is the most important work I've ever been associated with. **It's not just good for the planet, it's good for the rancher, and good for ALL.** It's also an incredible public-private partnership that the Natural Climate Solutions Bill would further support and advance. (next slide)

Group Meeting Photo

Our measured data is a new tool helping influence management decisions, and… has allowed us to sign a 10-year contract to deliver those captured carbon tons – as credits -- to the voluntary carbon market.

We're proof that measured and verified environmental performance can lead to new income streams in support of working landscapes and Oregon farmers, ranchers and forest owners. With increasing carbon capture and reduced GHG emissions, we're contributing to *nature positive outcomes.* (next slide)

OSU/Rancher Photo

And for those who purchase our "insets," they become a partner in the work while moving their own companies toward net zero targets.

The Natural Climate Solutions Bill would provide increased capacity for farmers and ranchers to advance this work on the ground, in cooperation with existing programs and agencies. I urge you to fund and expand this work across a broader piece of the Oregon landscape.