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On Behalf Of: Elders Climate Action--OR Chapter
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources
Measure: SB530

I'm John Weigant, a futurist and climate activist. I've been a physics teacher, urban planner, and taught software development to professional software engineers. I can recognize good code when I see it. SB 530 is good code, and I congratulate its authors. Nearly all testimony to date is in support, even the "neutral" comments. Like all code, both software and legislative, review by peers improves it, and several comments suggest improvements. I also recommend one of the best books on climate change, recently distributed to all of you: "From Knowledge to Power, The Comprehensive Handbook for Climate Science and Advocacy," 2021, by Dr. John Perona of Portland State University, published by the PSU press.

We old physics teachers know physics laws supersede political laws. The laws of conservation of mass and energy specify "Limits to Growth" (LTG), also a series by Meadows et al (1972, 1992, 2004). Likewise, the law of conservation of momentum, applied to the mass and velocity of human culture, say we are headed for a disastrous collision with planetary limits. We need maximum force to redirect QUANTITY growth and its resulting pollution, like CO2. Fortunately, Information grows exponentially, and determines the QUALITY of things. Things can always grow better, even if they can't grow bigger. The development of artificial intelligence means a pending explosion of information (a "singularity") to change the future in ways we cannot now fathom. For now, we must proceed according to what we know now.

Note also that capitalism assumes perpetual growth. It, too, must abandon growth from MORE to BETTER. "Business As Usual" (BAU) is a preferred mode of conservatives, to look backward to identify past successes. The future ahead is harder to see, but unless we change our paradigms fast, we are literally toast. LTG-2004's BAU2 scenario suggests life expectancy on earth will drop below 30 years by about 2060. And we are earth-bound. But with aggressive awareness and action, hope still exists.

--With appreciation, John Weigant