

Submitter: Kevin Howard

On Behalf Of: Friends of the Columbia Gorge

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Natural Resources

Measure: HB5008

Dear Legislators,

Climate change presents an existential threat to communities, state, nation and humanity. We must do all we can in the near term to build resiliency, to adapt to the proliferation of extreme weather events, and to limit the peak warming through proactive mitigation efforts in order to avoid the worst, irreversible effects. The Gorge Commission submitted six Policy Option Packages (POP) intended to support the efforts to protect one of our most precious natural assets: the Columbia Gorge scenic area. Unfortunately Three of the six POPs did not make it onto the Governor's budget. The following POPs were not included: Building Climate Resilience in the Gorge; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion outreach and plan implementation; and additional resources to hire a second attorney to manage the increasingly complex and heavy workload overseen by the Gorge Commission. These three POPs must be restored.

- POP 104 – Building resilience to climate change
- POP 105 – Diversity, equity, and inclusion outreach and implementation
- POP 103 – Legal counsel

I write you today to strongly urge you to include these critically important POPs in the final annual budget. Thank you for your consideration.