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On Behalf Of: Families for Climate
Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment
Measure: SB1559

My name is Nora Lehmann, and this testimony in support of SB 1559 is on behalf of Families for Climate. Families for Climate is a grassroots, volunteer-powered organization working to mobilize parents, kids and families for climate justice and a livable future for all. Our membership consists of almost one thousand parents, caregivers and teachers across Oregon.

Families for Climate is strongly in support of updating Oregon's greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals to align with the best available science. The urgency to reduce our climate pollution cannot be overstated, and it is crucial that our state takes every possible step to mitigate the effects of global warming.

Oregonians are already confronting the dangers of climate change, with rising temperatures, severe weather events, and devastating wildfires and smoke. As parents, we are tasked with both explaining the science, history, and frightening consequences of global heating to our children, and also, more painfully, explaining why the grown-ups are not solving the problem with the urgency it demands. There are no reassuring words to explain the fact that Oregon has not updated its climate goals in 17 years, during which time climate science has continued to evolve in understanding and sophistication, and the climate on which our lives depend continues to devolve before our eyes.

SB 1559 will strengthen Oregon's commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainable economic development, by better aligning us with both our West Coast neighbors and President Biden's goal to cut U.S. emissions in half by 2030. Emissions reductions in the short term will improve public health outcomes by improving air quality, and Oregon will be better positioned to grow our leadership in clean energy technology, creating better jobs and strengthening our economy.

Families for Climate urges lawmakers to prioritize updating Oregon's greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals and to ensure that this legislation reflects the stark urgency of the climate crisis, given that we have less than a decade remaining to cut our global greenhouse gas emissions in half to avoid catastrophic tipping points and irreversible climate impacts. It is time for Oregon to lead by example and set science-based targets that will drive meaningful reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and protect a safer future for our children and grandchildren.