



Alan R.P. Journet Ph.D.
Cofacilitator
Southern Oregon Climate Action Now
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Testimony supporting House Bill 3477

Chair Lively and members of the House Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment:

As I have noted previously, Southern Oregon Climate Action Now is a grassroots climate organization of some 2,000 Southern Oregonians. We are concerned about the climate crisis and seek federal, state and local action to address it. We are rural and coastal Southern Oregonians who live on the frontlines of the warming, reducing snowpack, heatwaves, drought, rising sea level and the increasing wildfire risk that these trends conspire to impose on us. Because of our concern, we pay close attention to efforts nationally, statewide, and locally that impact our collective efforts to address the climate crisis. As our logo above indicates, the focus of SOCAN is to promote action through science.

In 2007, the Oregon Legislature approved, and Governor Kulongoski signed HB3543 (OLIS 2007). This established greenhouse gas emissions reductions goals for 2050 were based on a 1990 baseline and required greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals as follows “(a) By 2010, arrest the growth of Oregon’s greenhouse gas emissions and begin to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.. (b) By 2020, achieve greenhouse gas levels that are 10 percent below 1990 levels. (c) By 2050, achieve greenhouse gas levels that are at least 75 percent below 1990 levels.” Regrettably, the achievement of these goals was based on a purely voluntary program. As has been demonstrated many times since then (e.g., OPUC 2017) the state has failed to achieve interim targets and has been failing to lower emissions on the desired trajectory. In relation to actions taken to that point, as depicted in Figure 1 OPUC (2017) stated “these actions are less than what is needed to meet the 2020 emission reduction goals set by the state. Additional action is needed to preserve the reductions established since 2005.” Following the failure of a series of legislative proposals that were designed, session after session, to provide a comprehensive plan for reducing greenhouse gas emissions statewide, resulting on several occasions by one party walking out of the chamber(s) to defeat the quorum, Governor Kate Brown’s Administration developed, and the Governor signed Executive Order 20-04 (Oregon 2020). This EO charged 16 agencies with the responsibility to develop plans without their authority to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote carbon sequestration within the framework of promoting social justice. The Executive Order called “for the State of Oregon to

reduce its GHG emissions (1) at least 45 percent below 1990 levels by 2035 and (2) at least 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.”

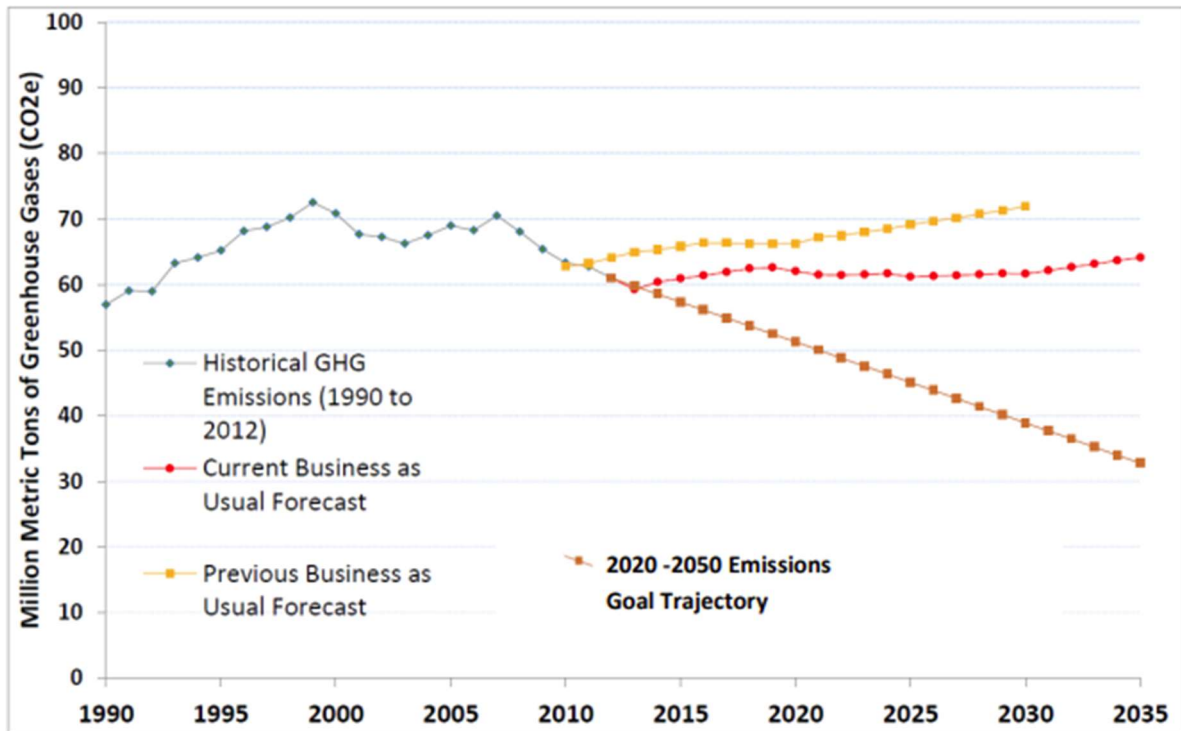


Figure 1. Comparison of the Oregon desired greenhouse gas emissions reduction trajectory at that time with the historic and 2016 business as usual trajectories. (OPUC 2917)

As a result, a number of agencies developed programs that have the effect of reducing emissions and promoting sequestration. Thus, by 2023, in its report to the Legislature OCAC (2023) was able to project (Figure 2) substantially greater emissions reductions by 2050. In 2023, the Oregon Climate Action Commission (2023 operating as the Oregon Global Warming Commission) recommended a package of Greenhouse Gas goal updates that suggested 45% below 1990 levels by 2030, 70% below 1990 by 2040 and 95% below 1990 by 2050. They also suggested: “By 2050, or as soon as practicable, Oregon will also achieve net zero emissions and achieve and maintain net negative emissions thereafter.”

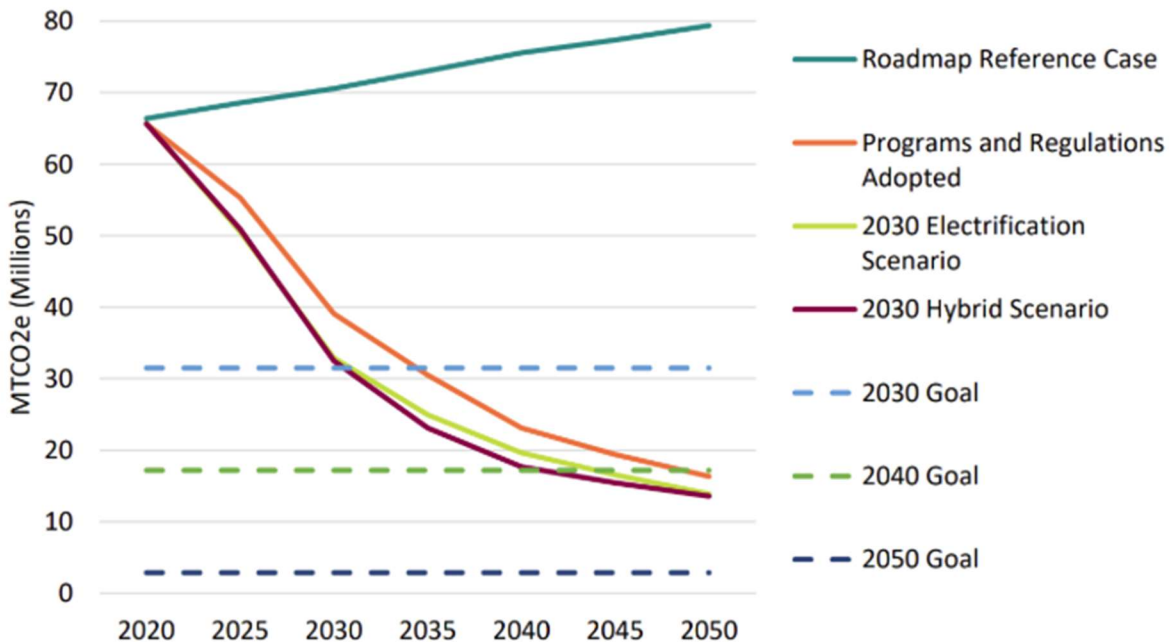


Figure 2 Projected Oregon emissions reduction trajectories compared to roadmap recommended goals (ACAC 2023)

In the meantime, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change had developed necessary trajectories for limiting global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels by 2050 (IPCC 2018). The need to follow such a trajectory was reiterated in subsequent IPCC summaries (e.g., IPCC 2023).

It remains unclear whether the collective political will exists to divert the global warming trajectory from that on which we currently find ourselves to a sufficient extent that life as we know it on our planet can survive. However, what is abundantly clear is that if each of us, in our own jurisdictions and our own households, does not contribute our reasonable share to the greenhouse gas emissions reductions globally needed, our collective future is bleak. No doubt some will argue that Oregon’s contribution to the problem is so inconsequential that we should not be expected to contribute our share to lowering global emissions. Such an argument, denies scientifically demonstrated reality, and should be rejected; it is morally unacceptable.

It is time for the Oregon legislature to update Oregon’s greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals consistent with the goals science demonstrates are necessary.

For the above reasons Southern Oregon Climate Action Now expresses appreciation to Representative Gamba for introducing HB3477 and also to Representatives Hudson and Neron, along with Senators Frederick, Golden, Patterson, Pham, and Taylor for supporting it. Thus, SOCAN support HB3477 and urges its swift passage.

Respectfully Submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alan Journet". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alan Journet Ph.D.

7113 Griffin Lane

Jacksonville

OR 97530-4182

alan@socan.eco

541-500-2331

541-301-4107

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