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On Behalf Of:
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Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3477

Thank you for this opportunity to voice my strong support for updating Oregon's climate targets not only to align with the scientific understandings of climate targets, but also to ensure Oregonians are safe, healthy, and economically prosperous.

First, goal setting is essential to measuring our success. Oregon's current targets—set in 2007—are now woefully out of date. By adopting updated goals that align with international standards and the U.S. National Climate Assessment, we can ensure we are responding effectively to the climate crisis. Specifically, this proposal sets new statewide targets to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 45% by 2030, 70% by 2040, and 95% by 2050. These new goals are necessary to keep Oregon resilient in the face of the climate crisis.

It would also establish a new goal to achieve net-zero emissions no later than 2050 and to maintain net-negative emissions thereafter and remove the outdated 2010 and 2020 interim goals from statute and replace them with new interim goals for 2030 and 2040. These updated targets will provide the framework we need to measure progress accurately and address the urgent threat of climate change.

Second, climate change is already harming Oregonians in multiple ways. In addition to intensifying wildfire seasons, we have seen significant declines in key crops—such as cherries, hazelnuts, grapes, and orchard fruits—due to drought and extreme heat. According to preliminary estimates, these factors contributed to yield drops of about 7–10% across these staple crops in 2023, with forecasts suggesting further reductions of 10–15% in 2024 if hot and dry conditions persist. These crops are Oregon's pride and provide prosperity to our farmers. Climate change is not a distant prospect—it is already impacting our farmers, rural communities, and Oregon's overall economy.

Third, the purpose of setting ambitious interim targets is to spur action sooner rather than later. Research shows that the sooner we cut carbon pollution, the more cost-effective it will be. Delaying solutions leads to deeper economic disruptions and more expensive fixes. Taking action now protects our families, our businesses, and our future prosperity.

Reducing Oregon's reliance on fossil fuels is central to these new climate targets and brings additional benefits:

- Strengthening our economy: By investing in local energy sources, supporting renewable energy installations, expanding public transportation, and encouraging the

transition to electric vehicles, we create good-paying local jobs and keep money circulating within Oregon's communities.

- Improving public health: A robust climate strategy reduces dangerous air pollutants like particulate matter and sulfur dioxide, which can cause respiratory and cardiovascular issues.

- Enhancing energy independence and resilience: Developing homegrown renewable energy lessens our reliance on out-of-state fossil fuel plants and stabilizes our energy supply.

The proposal also incorporates Oregon's newly recognized ability to store and sequester carbon naturally through forests, fields, marshes, and other natural resources—helping us achieve net-zero by 2050 and net-negative thereafter.

Finally, it is important to emphasize that these updated goals do not create additional regulatory authority. They provide clear targets and guidance but do not themselves impose new regulations.

In closing, updating Oregon's climate targets is about far more than preventing the worst of climate change; it is about future-proofing our economy, protecting public health, and ensuring a sustainable future for everyone in the state. Thank you for your time, and I respectfully urge you to support modernized, science-based climate goals for Oregon.