

Submitter: Sarah Guest

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB681

I live in Bend, OR, and work as a Behavioral Health Consultant (LCSW) for St. Charles Health System. As someone working in mental health, I know how vital it is to protect our natural spaces - our Earth - as much as possible. Often times “getting outside” and enjoying the natural world is a person’s favorite coping skill. We need fresh air. When fire smoke settles on our community more and more in the summer, not only does it cause feelings of depression and hopelessness by the very apocalyptic feel of it, but it is an ever-present reminder of the threat of wildfire completely ruining our community and places we love. I want to do everything I can to support taking care of our Earth, and divesting from fossil fuels is a huge part of that.

Private investments in fossil fuels are not a stable, reliable investment. I expect our state Treasury to invest responsibly and with future beneficiaries in mind. I am very concerned about climate extremes – and the economic impact of climate extremes. Our Treasury can choose sustainable investments that protect the portfolio and the planet – not fossil fuels, not predatory private investment firms, and not companies that greenwash the environmental impact of their activities. I expect the Treasury to make investments that are consistent with Oregon state energy goals. Oregonians are all too tired of drought and wildfires, and want the Oregon State Treasury to protect its citizens.

The Pause Act simply calls for no NEW investments in the fossil fuel industry for 5 years. A small ask! There are plenty of alternative investments that are future oriented.

We need to act now before it’s too late. Not investing in the fuel that is making our air smokier is vital.

Please vote the Pause Act out of committee. Thank you for your support of SB 681.

Sincerely,

Sarah Guest, LCSW
Behavioral Health Consultant