

Submitter: Ken Jones

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5520

To: The Honorable Co-Chairs Sen. Frederick and Rep. Levy, and members of the Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources,

Thank you for this chance for me to make this comment in Strong Support of SB 5520, an Act creating the Biennial Budget for the Dept. of Environmental Quality for 2025-27

I want to highlight part of this bill that is not discussed as much as a lead in to my comment on why the Oregon legislature needs to go out of its way pass this bill and support all that the Dept. of Environmental Quality does.

The Emergency that SB 5532 calls for at its end has been with us for awhile and it has gotten much more overwhelming by the efforts of the federal government to accelerate pollution and climate chaos by pushing coal, oil and gas, and now, in the last week, to have the Dept of Justice come after states that do not go along with their anti-science, irrational, environment destroying directives. Section 6 of the bill states that there is because of the immediate need to preserve the peace, health and security of the public, "an emergency is declared to exist". We have been in a climate emergency for a long time and Oregon has particularly felt its effects.

To give one example, in Eugene in January of 2024, there was an ice storm of such intensity and duration that, when the electric grid went down in many locations, the Airport was without power for three days with no flights in or out. Suppose the coming major earthquake had caused an outage. Highways would be impassable and the only way to get supplies and medical help might be through the Airport for possibly a much longer period. The Dept. of Environmental Quality has a grant program for resilience projects and the Airport has now been awarded a Feasibility Study grant to explore having the Airport be a Resilience Center with back-up power coming from a solar array with microgrid controls so that it can power itself in that emergency. It is very possible that the Airport will be able to get a Construction Grant from the same program at ODEQ. There are so many important programs that come from ODEQ that have a very outsized effect on people that are most vulnerable to disasters of all kinds.

Honestly, the number of social disturbances to people's lives that are addressed by the help that various programs at ODEQ help with make its budget the one along, especially given the federal government actions I mentioned above, that should get

the most. We need to stand up as a state to the federal government. The vast majority of the Oregon public stand strong for its environment. It is why they live here.

In addition, I think all of us should defer our kickback from income taxes this year and have it go to Department budgets like these. Truly, an emergency.

Thank You

Ken Jones