

Dear Members of the House Energy and Environment Committee,

Third grade was the first presidential race I remember; Al Gore vs. George W. Bush. I remember laying on the couch and seeing ads for both candidates, and one in particular was explaining how Gore believed in the theory of global warming. This particular ad highlighted the fact that Gore supported preserving the Amazon rainforest, while his opponent only saw monetary value in cutting it down. 7 year old I was, I immediately thought to myself, “saving trees! That’s good!” But unfortunately, having to wait 11 more grueling years until I could cast my first vote, I didn’t have the chance to vote for the nice looking man on television that wanted to save the rainforest. Now, older, and hopefully wiser, I see how drastically times have changed. Back in 2000, climate change was referred to as a theory; fast forward 15 years and countless improvements in science, climate change is finally becoming a more accepted reality for Americans.

According to NASA, 97% of climate scientists agree that warming trends observed by four different international science institutions are related to human activity. These reports are supported by 18 different American scientific associations, including The American Medical Association, The Geological Society of America, and the United States Academy of Sciences. Additionally, according to the Yale Project on Climate Communication, 63% of American adults think climate change is happening.¹ This across the board consensus is proof enough, both in terms of public opinion and scientific backing, to take steps at mitigating climate change, if not nationally, then beginning at the state level. The mainstream media in the United States has turned this into a hot-button left vs. right issue, when it needs to be focused on as comprehensive, human issue; as it affects us all, donkey or elephant.

House Bill 3250 would successfully provide the framework to bring our greenhouse gas emissions 85% below 1990 levels by 2050, which would match the required reduction rate to avoid a 2°C rise in global temperature levels. Oregon has the chance to inspire nation-wide climate action with this bill, and also dispel the accusation that climate change is a hoax in order to expand government power. As a college student who will be graduating next Spring, I see extreme importance in a carbon price, as my generation will be the one that must lead the transition off of fossil fuels to cleaner, more efficient forms of energy. By distributing the proceeds evenly amongst all Oregonian taxpayers, it ensures the road to climate stability will not be the financial burden of low income families, young people, and consumers. Noting a steady change in public opinion about the climate and the environment, I’m hopeful that the United States can begin to work towards a more sustainable future, and I’m writing to you to advocate my support for Oregon pioneering the country forward.

Sincerely,
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¹ environment.yale.edu/poe/v2014