

Oregon House Energy & Environment Committee Hearing
on Carbon Management and Accountability
April 14, 2015

My name is Jackie Yerby. I have worked in sustainability, social justice and in addressing social equity.

Today I am testifying as a person of faith. I am practicing and progressive Catholic. I have been a parishioner at St. Philip Neri Catholic Church in Portland since 1999. I have been a leader in the Catholic community having served on the board of Catholic Charities of Oregon.

My Catholic faith calls me to care for creation and to recognize the profound interdependence of all living creatures with each other and the natural world.

Pope Francis has called climate change a moral issue. He has declared that destroying God's creation is a sin.

We are all affected by climate change.

- People who live off of the land and on whom the Oregon economy depends – farmers, foresters and fishermen – are especially hard hit.
- People who live in low-income communities are disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change.
- People in the developing world are also being harmed by climate change. Where we in Oregon still have time to adapt and maybe even enjoy more moderate winters such as the one we had this year, people in the developing world will be devastated. Why should we care about people so far away? Because they are our brothers and sisters and we are called to care for each other.

I am also a person of science who has been following the climate change debate for over 20 years. The time to act is now. Some have questioned why this is a state issue. Actions taken by Oregon can pave the way for action on a broader scale. Oregon, Washington, California and British Columbia can partner together and combined represent the 5th largest economy in the world. Oregon can join with its neighbors to create a market and clean energy economy in the region that will cut pollution and improve quality of life and the health of our communities.

Oregon has targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, but is not on track to meeting these goals. The state needs to be serious about this commitment and put in a place a plan to meet the intent to reduce pollution that causes climate change. Putting a price on carbon -- directly with a fee, or indirectly with a cap, is essential to meeting state goals.

You have the power to do something meaningful and important to address climate change. I urge you to act now to enact carbon pricing in Oregon.