

May 27, 2015

The Honorable Val Hoyle
House Majority Leader
Chair, House Committee on Rules
Oregon State House of Representatives
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Union of Concerned Scientists Urges Support for HB 3470

Dear Chair Hoyle and members of the committee:

On behalf of the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) and our 11,000 Oregon members and supporters we strongly urge you to vote in support of HB 3470, a bill that directs the Department of Environmental Quality to establish a statutory limit on statewide greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 that is 10% below 1990 levels, and a limit for 2050 that is at least 75% below 2020 levels, with interim goals between 2020 and 2050.

This landmark and highly feasible measure would combine direct greenhouse gas source reductions with alternative compliance and market mechanisms. Reduction measures would need to be designed to maximize societal benefits, include cost-effectiveness considerations, prevent any increase in toxic air contaminants and address the potential for air pollution in low-income communities. UCS is particularly supportive of using both market measures and complementary policies, such as renewable energy, low-carbon fuels and zero-emission vehicles, and energy efficiency measures. These measures provide guidance and certainty in reducing emissions while maintaining market flexibility and lowered costs for more difficult emissions reductions.

The science is clear that human activity is the dominant cause of warming over the last half century. If global greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise, the scope and severity of risks will accelerate. Already Oregonians are forced to address many threats from climate change.

The current impacts and future risks of climate change in Oregon include record-breaking wildfires and other damages to forests, declining snowpack and earlier snowmelt in the mountains that jeopardizes summer water supplies, and the consequences to shellfish hatcheries from an acidifying ocean.

These changes will impact:

- Firefighting costs, which totaled \$280 million in 2014 as fires scorched 870,000 acres.
- 107,000 homes—8 percent of total residential properties in Oregon—valued at \$12.7 billion are at high risk of damage from wildfire.
- Oregon's tourism industry that contributes nearly \$10 billion annually to the state's economy.

- The economic viability of the state's ski resorts and other winter sports.
- Oregon's forestry sector that employs about 76,000 people and contributes about \$12.7 billion to the economy.
- Oregon's commercial fisheries that contribute more than \$500 million in personal income annually.

Climate change compromises Oregon's quality of life and threatens the state's future. We need your leadership now more than ever to reduce the risks of a dangerously warming climate.

HB 3470 would give Oregon to the opportunity to work with neighboring states and provinces to take appropriate steps to reduce heat-trapping emissions that would cause these impacts and potentially more devastating consequences in the decades to come. The emissions choices we make today—in Oregon and throughout the world—will shape the planet our children and grandchildren inherit. Support for HB 3470 today is a crucial step to help create a cleaner, safer, and healthier future for Oregon.

Sincerely,



Adrienne Alvord
Director, California and Western States
Union of Concerned Scientists



Jason Barbose
Western States Campaign Manager
Union of Concerned Scientists