

Honorable Val Hoyle, Chair, House Committee on Rules  
Honorable Members of the Committee  
900 Court Street NE, Room 295,  
Salem, Oregon 97301  
503-986-1414

June 23, 2015

Dear Chair Hoyle and Members of the House Committee on Rules,

We are writing to you today to ask that you MOVE HB 3470 out of Rules with a “do pass” recommendation to the full Ways and Means Committee. This critical legislation is imperative to avoid costly and devastating climate chaos here in Oregon.

We are part of a group called Hair on Fire Oregon—reflecting the urgency we are feeling in southern Oregon over our changing climate. For two winters now, we have seen virtually no snow, our springs are coming 3 weeks early, and drought and fire are wiping out our wells and our forests. This coming weekend southern Oregon is predicted to have record high temperatures and a second wave of unseasonably early thunderstorms. Thirteen days ago we had our first lightning-caused fires of the season, with some still burning out of control. Nineteen (more than half!) of Oregon’s counties have already been declared “drought emergencies” in 2015. In short, we are feeling the effects of climate instability that scientists have predicted and **we are frightened**—for ourselves, for our livelihoods and for future generations.

On April 14<sup>th</sup> many of us traveled to Salem to hear the expert testimony and testify ourselves on the urgent need for Oregon to pass legislation which would cap and then reduce greenhouse gases over time. Since 2007, Oregon has agreed that greenhouse gases need to be reduced and Governor Kate Brown, on May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015, signed the first-of-its-kind UNDER2MOU along with 11 other states and provinces committing to lower Oregon’s per capita greenhouse gas emissions from the current 9+ tons to under 2 tons, or attain 80-95% below 1990 greenhouse gas levels by 2050. These are highly commended and desperately needed goals, **and yet no legislation has been passed that would achieve these outcomes**. Many of us believe we can wait no longer if we want to avoid irreversible damage and catastrophic costs to our lives and livelihoods.

The good news is that we have a great opportunity right now. HB 3470 is an incredibly well thought out solution to getting Oregon on track to reduce our impacts and contribute as a leader on climate change. HB 3470 is based on solid and proven practices currently being used in California and Quebec. These practices, according to the expert testimonies given on April 14<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> to the House Energy and Environment Committee and recent reports, **are working!** Not only are greenhouse gases being reduced on, or ahead of, schedule, but economies are thriving. THERE IS NOT A DOWNSIDE TO THIS BILL.

Our hope in writing to you is to encourage you to familiarize yourself with the merits of this bill and educate your colleagues. It is not a Johnny-come-lately, but rather the careful culmination of much research, observation and practice. Some of HB 3470’s key features are:

1. Requires the state environmental agency to develop and implement an action plan for meeting emission reductions based on the best available science.

2. Emission limits would apply to approximately 40 businesses in Oregon that are the largest producers of greenhouse gas emissions, targeting 85% of emissions statewide.
3. Fairly and gradually prices the emissions from these large businesses, with revenue invested in statewide conservation, renewable energy and efficiency projects.
4. Authorizes a market based incentive program creating economic incentives for early and voluntary emission reductions seen to be working successfully elsewhere.
5. Emission limits are based on ongoing research by a panel of 3000 qualified climate scientists, updated every five years.
6. Safeguards are established to protect vulnerable low income communities.
7. Would link Oregon with a regional group of western states and two Canadian provinces for greater effectiveness, forming the fifth largest economy in the world, to provide leadership for the rest of the country.
8. Creates legislation proven by seven other states to enhance job and economic growth along with emission reductions.

**HB 3470 is a bill that can provide an economic boost to our state** while propelling us into a leadership role to mitigate climate crisis.

According to this report produced by The Climate Trust for the legislature last year, [An Evaluation of Potential Carbon Pricing Mechanisms for the State of Oregon Policy Paper for the 2014 Oregon Legislature](#), the following chart, found on page 2, depicts the potential harm to various economic sectors in Oregon **if no** action is taken to price and stem the flow of greenhouse gas pollution. We can attest here in southern Oregon, we are already experiencing “warmer, drier summers” and “reduced winter snow pack in the Cascades.” According to this chart, these two threats alone will jeopardize 47.6 billion dollars of existing Oregon industry revenue.

Threat:	Leading to:	Valuation of industries affected:
Warmer, drier summers	Drought Heat waves Wildfires Disease and pest increases	Forestry: \$12.7B <sup>4</sup> Wine: \$2.7B <sup>5</sup>
Sea level rise along coast	Erosion Flooding	Coastal Real Estate: No information available
Reduced winter snowpack in the Cascades	Increased water prices Increased irrigation needs Decreased tourism	Agriculture: \$23B <sup>5</sup> Tourism: \$9.2B <sup>7</sup>
Increased ocean acidity	Algae blooms Biodiversity changes	Salmon fisheries: \$6.7M <sup>8</sup>

**These impacts will be significant and costly.** The report goes on to say that “...continued worldwide inaction, could cost anywhere from 5-20% of global GDP each year to perpetuity, while action would cost only 1%.” HB3470, creates a solid plan that contributes to a solution taking us from inaction to action.

Since HB3470 is modeled after California’s AB 32, it is relevant to look at their achievements. California’s program thus far has proven to be successful not just in reducing greenhouse gas emissions,

but also in stimulating job growth. Despite fears by some that a cap and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions would stifle the economy, **this has not been born out**. Expert testimony by The Climate Trust Executive Director Sean Penrith stated: *“California added more jobs than any other state during the economic recovery and it has attracted \$21 billion dollars in venture capital investment, more than all the other states in this country combined, while its core clean economy grew 10 times faster than any other sector in the state. Revenues from auction have raised \$1.6 billion dollars, a significantly higher number than was expected at this point in the program.”* This testimony, and the willingness of California’s EPA Secretary Matt Rodriguez to share data with Oregon, gives us much encouragement that HB3470, and our working in conjunction with California and Quebec, could be just the shot in the arm Oregon is looking for. It would move us away from harmful effects of Greenhouse gas pollution and toward a renewable clean energy economy that Oregonians across the state could rally behind and benefit from. **Oregon is ready for this legislation.**

For you in the legislature, **the time for action is now**. The planet is reeling and we will continue to feel those effects both here in southern Oregon and across the state. As we move forward, we encourage you to see the hope that will be generated by allowing Oregonians to be pro-active and throw our backs into doing something that will help mitigate the increasing uncertainty our children and future generations are facing.

Last month I watched the [PBS film](#) made on *Our Children’s Trust* and the incredible work that Mary Wood and Julia Olson are doing--all based right here in Oregon!--to simply ask, don’t we have an obligation to our kids and future generations to protect the basic life support systems of the planet?

Pope Francis’s encyclical focuses additional urgency on the leadership that is called for to navigate our way through this self-made crisis. Business-as-usual will fail and bold leaders will be necessary.

Oregon has a rich history of people willing to step up for change, from Tom McCall to Mary Wood. We ask that you heed the growing signs and act with courage to bring Oregon into the forefront and be the change the world needs. Partisan politics has no place in a discussion where the future of civilization is concerned. We need action, and we need it now.

We urge you to allow HB3470 to move out of the House Rules Committee with a “do pass” recommendation to the full Ways and Means Committee and hope you will share with your colleagues the importance of passing this bill during **this legislative session**.

There is NO OTHER BILL that comes close to the importance of this legislation. For if we are unsuccessful in our attempts to stabilize the climate, **NOTHING ELSE WILL MATTER**. We are deeply appreciative of the work you do and thank you for your support of HB 3470.

Sincerely,

Deb Evans and Ron Schaaf  
Hair on Fire Oregon  
Ashland