

For distribution to members of the Oregon State Legislature Committee on Rules and posting at OLIS

Subject: Written testimony and documentation in support of HB 3470 (the Climate Stability and Justice Act) for reducing greenhouse gas emissions

Members of the Oregon State Committee on Rules, now considering HB 3470:

Purpose of this communication

Having read with care the final text of HB 3470 (the Climate Stability and Justice Act) for reducing greenhouse gas emissions (1), I am writing now to provide committee members with documentation in support of this bill and of its passage out of committee so that the Oregon legislature may consider it and take effective action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to support the development of renewable energy sources.

(1) <https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2015R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/HB3470/A-Engrossed>

Effects of the changing climate on health and well-being

As a resident of Oregon since 1965, I write from the perspective of my years of experience as a pediatrician. I see the effects of the changing climate in the devastating effects of drought on our farm families, cattle ranchers, business owners, livestock, shoppers, forests, grasslands, fish, game, and wildlife (2). I know that even subtle changes in weather and climatic conditions can increase stress on our most vulnerable populations (3). Especially for children, older adults, people who live alone, people of non-white origin, homeless people, people without access to air-conditioning, people below the poverty line, people with chronic illness, people with impaired mobility or cognitive function, and outdoor workers, the direct health consequences of increases in air temperatures can be life-threatening or fatal (4).

(2) Kelly House. "Oregon drought fuels unease about state's long-term water security." The Oregonian/OregonLive. March 27, 2015 (online). "State's water security gradually eroding." March 29, 2015 Page A1 and Pages A8-A9 (print)

http://www.oregonlive.com/environment/index.ssf/2015/03/oregon_drought_fuels_unease_ab.html

(3) Multnomah County Health Department. Climate Change and Public Health Preparation Plan. Pages 12 -21.

<https://multco.us/file/8243/download>

(4) US Environmental Protection Agency. "Analyses of the Effects of Global Change on Human Health and Human Systems" (SAP 4.6), especially pages 2-23 to 2-26

<http://cfpub.epa.gov/ncea/global/recordisplay.cfm?deid=197244>

Causes of global warming

The US National Academy of Sciences has determined, as have many other scientific bodies, that global warming comes primarily from emissions caused by the combustion of fossil fuels, and cannot be explained by natural causes such as variation in the sun's output; that we now have enough evidence to warrant taking action on the changing climate; that if emissions continue unabated, future changes in climate will substantially exceed those that have occurred so far; and that this is not just an issue for the future, but is an urgent issue for today (5).

(5) National Academy of Sciences and the Royal Society. "Climate Change: Evidence & Causes"

<http://dels.nas.edu/resources/static-assets/exec-office-other/climate-change-full.pdf>

Additional effects of fossil fuel extraction, refining, and burning on national economy and security

Reports from other responsible institutions express urgent concerns about additional serious consequences of global warming caused by dependence on fossil fuels. For example, an exhaustive study released by the International Monetary Fund presents evidence showing that eliminating subsidies for fossil fuels would cut emissions of carbon dioxide, the main greenhouse gas; save millions of lives; and add billions of dollars to US government revenue, which could be used to invest in health care, renewable energy, mass transit and other public services (6, 7). The Department of Defense calls for reducing the use of fossil fuels and increasing the use of renewable energy, and predicts that further global warming caused by greenhouse gas emissions would further increase the risk of uncontrolled wildfires, coastal erosion and inundation, such serious health problems as respiratory illness due to increased ozone levels, and "the destabilization of regions of the world already prone to conflict." (8)

(6) The Editorial Board. The High Cost of Dirty Fuels. NY Times May 21, 2015 (online), May 21, 2015 Page A26 (print). http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/21/opinion/the-high-cost-of-dirty-fuels.html?_r=0

(7) David Coady, Ian Parry, Louis Sears, and Baoping Shang. How Large Are Global Energy Subsidies? International Monetary Fund Working Paper WP/15/105. May 2015.

<http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/2015/wp15105.pdf>

(8) Department of Defense. Strategic Sustainability Performance Plan FY 2012.

http://www.acq.osd.mil/ie/download/green_energy/dod_sustainability/2012/DoD%20SSPP%20FY12-FINAL.PDF

Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with this documentation in support of HB 3470 (the Climate Stability and Justice Act) for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Together with other Oregonians, I appeal to you to move the bill out of Committee and to do everything you can to ensure its passage during this legislative session. Why? To protect the health and well-being of all rural and urban Oregonians, especially all our children and other vulnerable people; to facilitate the development of support for renewable sources of energy; to protect our economy and our security; and to stimulate other governments to take comparable action to protect our planet and all who live here.

Warmly,

Herman M. Frankel, M.D. ([503-227-4892](tel:503-227-4892))

3310 NW Savier Street

Portland, OR 97210-1937