



DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF LANE COUNTY

To: Oregon Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
From: Chris Wig, Chair, Democratic Party of Lane County
Re: Support for SB 1574/Healthy Climate Act

February 1, 2016

Dear Chair Edwards and Members of the Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the 87,517 Democrats in Lane County to urge you to vote Yes on Senate Bill 1574, the Healthy Climate Act, which would protect our environment by laying the groundwork for a carbon pricing system in Oregon.

Democrats in Lane County strongly believe it is in the public interest to encourage conservation and environmental stewardship by individuals, businesses and organizations.

There exists a clear and compelling scientific consensus that carbon dioxide emissions are the primary cause of global climate change, which is a threat to public health, national security, food security, business supply chains and ultimately life on Earth. These costs to our society are not reflected in the price of fossil fuels and therefore could be described as hidden costs – or market externalities – of fossil fuels. The members of our Party believe that a simple price signal to consumers is the most efficient way to discourage consumption of fossil fuels and encourage innovation of alternatives.

Furthermore, the preponderance of research – including the 2013 Tax and Shift report published by the Portland State University Northwest Economic Research Center and the 2014 Carbon Tax Study published by Regional Economic Models, Inc. – indicates a carbon fee would stimulate economic growth and rapidly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Research suggests an upstream fee on fossil fuels would make low-carbon sectors of Oregon's economy more competitive, and that renewable energy development is a growth opportunity.

Please contact me if you have any questions or require additional information. I look forward to working with you to create a safe, prosperous and enduring Oregon.

Your friend,

Chris Wig
Chair
Democratic Party of Lane County