

Kate Brown
Governor



Oregon Commission for Women
"Advocating Equality and Diversity"
1819 SW 5th Ave., Portland, OR 97201
O 503.302.9725/F 503.473.8519
Email: oaco.mail@oregon.gov
Website: www.oregon.gov/Women

Testimony in Support of SB 1574
February 2, 3 pm, Hearing Room E
Senate Committee on Environmental and Natural Resources

Chair Edwards, Vice Chair Olson and Senators Dembrow, Prozanski, and Whitsett,

I am Stephanie Swanson, serving on the Oregon Commission for Women. I am also Vice President, Communications, for Enhabit (formerly Clean Energy Works), an Oregon non-profit organization working to upgrade homes for energy efficiency, health, safety and comfort of all Oregon homeowners.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak specifically in support of an equitable carbon pricing program in Oregon that protects households and communities from impacts, reinvests a portion of the revenue to provide economic opportunities, supports more resilient communities, and makes the policy development and implementation process inclusive and accountable.

In particular I am here to advocate for a climate solution that leads with racial equity and adheres to the principles outlined by organizations like the Coalition for Communities of Color and others:

1. **Prevent Harm.** Protect disadvantaged communities and prevent any increase in the emissions of toxic air pollutants. Prioritize reducing financial impacts for lower-income households. Consider impacts of environmental investments on displacement and gentrification.
2. **Provide Benefit.** Reinvest to reduce disparities and create opportunities directly in disadvantaged communities. Resource allocation should respond directly to the priorities and disparities within historically underserved communities.
3. **Inclusive Design and Implementation.** Inclusive, transparent and accountable policy development and implementation requires involvement of those most impacted. This includes:
 - Robust public engagement with disadvantaged communities.
 - Advocate and organize with historically underserved communities to ensure full on decision-making/advisory boards or commissions tasked with policy design, implementation, reporting, and deployment of revenue.
 - State agencies must accurately monitor and publicly report impacts on climate change indicators and benefits for disadvantaged communities.

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I would also like to speak specifically to the High Road Agreement language in SB 1574 that specifies goals related to accessible economic opportunities generated by this Climate Policy.

At Enhabit, we have seen first-hand the benefits resulting from High Road Agreements, particularly for women in the construction trades. As an example, we have worked since 2009 with organizations like Oregon Tradeswomen to create pathways for entry level, living-wage work in weatherization. These green jobs not only deliver paychecks that amount to 180% above minimum wage, but they deliver direct, relevant work experience that in many cases contribute to workers moving into high-paying, high-skilled apprenticeship programs.

Local, high-paying, high-skilled jobs provide homeowners and business owners with a higher quality project that in turn delivers greater energy savings, carbon reduction and ultimately more resilient communities as the investment dollars stay within the local community.

Climate change is urgent, and inaction is not an option. Climate change also has a disproportionate impact on Oregon's rural and urban low-income people and people of color – communities that already suffer from clear economic, health and environmental disparities.

We must protect historically underserved communities with properly designed climate policy that delivers benefits where they are most needed. The OCFW and I urge you to positively consider SB 1574 as an important step for Oregon's environment and communities.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Stephanie Swanson', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Stephanie Swanson, Commissioner
Oregon Commission for Women