



To: Senate Environment and Natural Resources and House Energy and the Environment
From: Margaret Tallmadge, Environmental Justice Manager, The Coalition of Communities of Color
Date: March 1, 2017
Re: Testimony on 2016 OR SB 1574: Healthy Climate Bill

Dear Chair Dembrow, Chair Helm and Members of the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee and House Energy and the Environment Committee:

The Coalition of Communities of Color supports SB 557 and SB 748.

Formed in 2001, the Coalition of Communities of Color is an alliance of 19 culturally-specific community based organizations with representation from six communities of color: African, African American, Asian and Pacific Islander, Latino, Native American and Slavic.

We are a diverse coalition of community leaders, organizers, direct service providers, and racial justice advocates that represent a broad cross section of communities in Oregon who have been underserved by the state's political representation, investments, and basic services. Communities of Color and low-income communities in Oregon face clear economic, health and environmental disparities: lack of access to green spaces, healthy foods, and transit; worse air, soil and water quality; and high unemployment, rent burden, and housing instability. These disparities exist even though communities of color make up 25% of Oregon's population, including 40% of children aged zero to five.

Similarly, the effects of pollution and climate change hit our communities first and most severely. Our communities are already feeling the effects: shortened growing seasons, loss of salmon which sustains some Oregon tribes, disproportionate asthma rates, heat related illness and death, and flooding resulting in displacement of our most vulnerable communities. Like climate change itself, poorly designed climate solutions without the participation of most impacted communities can increase environmental burdens and costs for our communities. These are only a few of the stories and facts our families tell us:

- The majority people of color Cully Neighborhood is 9 degrees warmer than the rest of the city because of little tree canopy and green space. Few families can afford to install and pay for air conditioning.
- Portland's Jade District, one of the most diverse areas in the state, have families vexed by respiratory and cardiovascular illness because of their exposure to pollution.
- Farmworkers and day laborers across the state, who are often low-income, people of color, and/or immigrants face life-threatening heat in our increasingly long, hot summers.
- Our tribal communities are facing threats to their cultural practices because of changing salmon runs and agricultural seasons.
- Increasing numbers of our refugee and immigrant families recognize the economic and political instability at home is due to the impacts of climate change on economies and livelihoods.

We know who is hit first and worst by climate change and the pollution that causes it-- people of color, low-income communities, Indigenous people, immigrants and refugees, and farm workers and day laborers.



That's why the Coalition of Communities of Color is asking you to vote for the Clean Energy Jobs bills, a proposal which would 1) cap climate pollution, 2) require polluters to pay their fair share for the pollution hurting our communities, and 3) reinvest the proceeds into our most impacted communities—communities of color, low-income communities and rural communities. We also ask you prioritize equity by 1) preventing harm to our communities; 2) creating economic, social and environmental benefits and opportunities for our communities; and 3) ensuring inclusive and accountable decision making in the process and implementation.

We recognize passing equitable carbon pricing policy is a win-win: we have a unique opportunity to mitigate the impacts of climate change, increase Oregon's economic and infrastructural resiliency, and yield direct economic and environmental benefits to communities most vulnerable to impacts of climate change. But this won't happen by itself. We must be intentional about creating these opportunities.

As an active stakeholder in the Clean Energy Jobs Bills campaign, the Coalition of Communities of Color supports 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. Please support SB 557 and SB 748 and ensure we include equity at every step.

Please contact maggie@coalitioncommunitiescolor.org if you have any questions.

Signed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M Tallmadge". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter "M" being particularly large and stylized.

Margaret Tallmadge
Environmental Justice Manager
Coalition of Communities of Color

