

Chairman Denbrow, Chairman Helm and members of the Committee,

My name is Dr. Andy Harris, from Portland, and I am testifying in support of SB 557 on behalf of Oregon Center for Christian Voices (OCCV).

OCCV believes we are called to be stewards of God's creation. We recognize an imperative to address climate change and transition off fossil fuels. The heating of our planet from the release of greenhouse gases is causing climate disruption with severe storms, melting glaciers, droughts, and warming and acidification of our seas. Here in Oregon we are confronted with dying forests, increasing forest fires, warming rivers that threaten salmon runs, and a declining shellfish industry.

While all of us are impacted by the consequences of climate change, the poor and vulnerable are most at risk. Refugees are fleeing Africa because of drought and famine. Low lying countries like Bangladesh and island nations are flooding as sea levels rise. Infectious diseases like malaria and dengue are spreading as temperatures rise.

Oregon Center for Christian Voices advocates for people whose voices often are not heard, including those who are poor, hungry, homeless and marginalized. We feel compelled to speak out while the Earth heats and vulnerable people suffer.

Oregon can no longer equivocate. It is time to put a price on carbon pollution and invest in renewal energies, energy efficiency and public transit.

OCCV is particularly supportive of the provision that a minimum of 35% of carbon fees are to be invested in low-income and rural communities. As people of faith, we urge your support of SB 557.

Thank you.

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Board of Directors, Oregon Center for Christian Voices
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