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May 9, 2017

The Honorable Co-Chair Senator Lew Frederick

The Honorable Co-Chair Representative Brad Witt

The Honorable Senator Fred Girod

The Honorable Senator Kathleen Taylor

The Honorable Representative Sal Esquivel

The Honorable Representative Ken Helm

The Honorable Representative Rick Lewis

The Honorable Representative Karin Power

RE: Opposition to House Bill 2269

Dear Co-Chairs Frederick and Witt and members of the committee:

We are writing in opposition of House Bill 2269 which increases Title V and ACDP fees to fund the new "Cleaner Air Oregon" regulatory scheme. The increased fees can create a hardship for businesses while providing the DEQ more money to create a program that will greatly harm Oregon's manufacturers and rural communities like Klamath and reduce any opportunity to develop in competitive markets. We also oppose the DEQ committing more resources to a program that has not yet been fully designed, explained, and vetted by this legislative body.

The increase in fees and proposed framework are an overreach and unnecessary in our community. Over the past several years, Klamath County has reached attainment of Air Quality Standards through community-wide efforts. For many years, Klamath's unique topography and higher than normal use of wood stoves led to non-attainment. Over the last 20 years, our community has identified and worked to successfully solve problems with air pollution. These efforts included:

- restricting wood burning when weather conditions could lead to accumulation of particulate in the Klamath Falls area
- removal of an uncertified woodstoves upon sales of a home
- prohibiting the use of burn barrels
- enforcing wood stove curtailment
- change-out of wood stoves funded by the city of Klamath Falls, EPA and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

According to the EPA, Klamath's air pollution has little to do with industry. In fact, according to their statistics, industry only makes up 1% of the pollution in our air. Our local companies (and I'd say most Oregon companies) work hard to prevent air pollution, protect public health and the health of all of us who work and live in the community. These companies are also some of our largest employers. If they were to move operations, it would create a loss of jobs and harm our economy.

Further, these increased fees (and the program it aims to fund) could limit the ability to attract new industrial or manufacturing companies to our county and the State of Oregon.

"The Klamath County Chamber of Commerce is committed to Klamath County by advancing its economic vitality and quality of life through the education, promotion and networking of our members"

Manufacturing jobs are critical to Oregon. They offer better pay and more stability than other jobs. In fact, employment is itself a key indicator of human and community health. Regulations that cost jobs will significantly affect the health of newly unemployed and strain local social services.

Adding increased fees could cause businesses to curtail operations, shut down or leave the state to states with less restrictive, but adequate, regulations that are constantly competing to prevent prospective businesses from establishing operations in Oregon, and worse, attempting to attract our employers away from us enticing them to relocate in their state. Unreasonable fees that cost jobs would hurt Oregon's ability to attract new manufacturing jobs and put current manufacturing jobs at risk.

We believe Oregon can have both clean air and a healthy economy with fair and reasonable air regulations. New rules should both protect public health and allow companies adequate time to phase in new requirements to make sure employment and operations can be maintained.

Companies that have been in compliance with air quality standards for years should not be required to pay increased fees or meet unreasonable or unachievable standards.

We urge you to oppose House Bill 2269 and adopt reasonable rules to protect both health of our communities and the health of Oregon's manufacturing operations. Any regulations and the related funding mechanisms should be appropriate to our State's diverse communities. The Klamath Basin's rural and developing economy is entirely different than the upper Willamette Valley and a broad brush only harms the most vulnerable rural communities. In this regard we must weigh the detrimental health effects of economies whose vitality are challenged by regulation against specific environmental factors. The balance is the key to prudent regulation.

Respectfully,



Heather Tramp
Executive Director

Cc:

The Honorable Representative Mike McLane
The Honorable Representative E. Werner Reschke
The Honorable Senator Dennis Linthicum