

Rev. Katherine A. Jesch

1221 SW 11th Avenue, #941, Portland, OR 97205
503-758-6662 kathjesch@earthlink.net

February 7, 2018

To: Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
 Chair Senator Michael Dembrow
 House Committee on Energy and Environment
 Chair Representative Ken Helm

Re: Testimony for HB4001 and SB1507 – Clean Energy Jobs Bill
 Public Hearing scheduled 2/7/2018
 Email: senr.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

Senator Dembrow and Representative Helm:

I am a Portland area resident and voter in Senate District 18 and House District 36. I spent the first twenty years of my career in natural resources management at the local level and the federal level. I am now a Unitarian Universalist minister, affiliated with First Unitarian Church in Portland, and supporting and facilitating communities of faith in advocating for social and environmental justice through public policies and local actions that reflect our moral obligations to protect all of creation and to care for our most vulnerable neighbors.

I enthusiastically support the Clean Energy Jobs bill. It will make Oregon a leader in the growing clean energy economy and climate protection by putting a cap on climate pollution statewide, a price on greenhouse gas emissions from the largest polluters, and investment back into our communities to generate good-paying jobs and build clean energy solutions.

I am grateful for all the work you have done, especially over the last several months of drafting legislation to address the climate crisis. I believe SB1507 and HB4001 (the Clean Energy Jobs Bills) provides the best approach for limiting the production of greenhouse gases and investing in the infrastructure we need to support an economy based on renewable energy without leaving anyone behind. The approach described in these bills resolves many of the challenges our neighboring states have struggled with, especially relating to impacts from raising energy costs and protecting essential parts of Oregon's economy while providing benefits to Oregon's most vulnerable communities. You should be proud of yourselves for your creativity and collaboration in this process.

The federal administration's decision to pull the U.S out of the Paris Climate Agreement jeopardizes the health and well-being of our citizens and undermines America's credibility and leadership. Without a strong response, we will all be at deepening risk from climate disasters. It is abundantly clear that local and state-level action is needed to make the Paris commitments a reality. I applaud Governor Kate Brown's vow that Oregon will live up to the promises of the Paris Climate Agreement, and I have implored her to support this bill. We must uphold the spirit of the Agreement to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions in Oregon.

I understand the reluctance expressed by some of your colleagues to address this huge challenge in a short session of the legislature, but it's not as if this is a new conversation. The bill you had ready last year for the long session should have received extensive discussion. Of course there was an excuse to postpone deliberations because of the budget crisis Oregon had to resolve. I understood that at the time. If we postpone again this year because this is a short session, there is likely to be another crisis next year that forces postponing again. The challenge is that the climate crisis is getting worse each year. Implementation of this bill will take three years, and each year we postpone guarantees that the damage will be that much worse. If we wait until it's the climate crisis that forces postponement of other issues, it will be too late to save us.

With the work you have done over the past 6 months or so to get input from every source that needed to have a say, hearings should go much more quickly and I trust will be able to bring it to the joint committee vote in time to be brought to the full legislature. **Postponing Oregon's solution will not postpone disaster. We must act now!** Let us join our neighbors on the west coast and in the northeast. Time is up!

Sincerely,

The Rev. Katherine Jesch

Affiliated Community Minister
First Unitarian Church of Portland
Kathjesch@earthlink.net
503-758-6662 (ok to text)