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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 live in Corvallis, Oregon, and vote in Senate District 08 (Sen. Sara Gelser) and House District 16 (Rep. Dan Rayfield). I spent my professional career as a scientific/technical writer, primarily in the fields of environmental science and computer science. At present, I serve as chair of the Climate Justice Task Force at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Corvallis. I also work on the environmental campaign for Oregon UU Voices for Justice, which advocates for social and environmental justice through public policies in the Oregon Legislature based on our moral and ethical obligations to protect the earth and to care for our most vulnerable neighbors.

I fully support the Clean Energy Jobs legislation (SB 1507 and HB 4001). We face a global emergency and the time for bold action is now. There is no more time to waste. This legislation is a first step. It will (1) make Oregon a leader in the growing clean energy economy, (2) help reduce fossil fuel emissions by putting a cap on climate pollution statewide and a price on greenhouse gas emissions from the largest polluters, and (3) invest funds back into Oregon communities to generate well paid jobs and develop clean energy..

I appreciate the work you have done over the last several months of drafting legislation to address the climate crisis. I believe this legislation 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 SB 1507 and HB 4001 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 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 should have received extensive discussion last year in the long session. It is understandable that Oregon's budget crisis prevented that. But if the legislation is postponed again this year because this is a short session, there is likely to be another crisis next year that forces postponing again. The climate crisis is getting worse each year and it is urgent that we take bold action. It will take 3 years to implement this legislation, and each delay guarantees that the damage will be that much worse.

With the good work you have done over the past 6 months or so, hearings should go more quickly and you should be able to bring the bills to the joint committee for a vote in time to be brought to the full legislature. Postponing Oregon's solution will increase the risk of disaster. We must act now! Time is up!

Sincerely,

Susan Christie

Climate Justice Task Force

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Corvallis

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