

Chairman Michael Dembrow and members of the Senate committee on Environment and Natural Resources

The Douglas County Global Warming Coalition representing over 450 members of our community wishes to express our strongest support for Senate Bill 1507 and House Bill 4001, the Clean Energy Jobs bills. By putting a price on greenhouse gas emissions, these bills will significantly reduce deadly climate pollution in a fair and equitable way. Not only will low income and vulnerable households be protected but the resulting clean energy jobs will boost our economy.

As the consequences of climate change grow more severe, it is critical we take action now. The year 2017 saw record breaking forest fires across the Western United States. And Douglas County was no exception. For a timber dependent community such as ours, this meant loss of resources, loss of property and, most important, endangering the health and well-being of our citizens.

The recently released National Climate assessment mandated by Congress noted that climate change was responsible for over half the observed forest fuel aridity in the Western United States in the years 1979-2015 and doubled the forest fire area over the period 1984-2015. But the worst is yet to come. A recent study by scientists from the University of Idaho and Columbia University concluded: 'In the 2030's fires will be unrecognizable to what we are seeing now.'

These bills will do more than reduce climate pollution. By directing significant job creating resources to rural areas, it will revitalize their economies. For Douglas County, which has perennially suffered from unemployment higher than the State average, these bills will be a blessing.

For too long we have debated and delayed. For too long we have justified inaction, waiting for the perfect bill. And each day we fail to act guarantees more pain, suffering and tragedy. The time for climate change legislation is now. For what greater calling can there be than to ensure we have a livable planet.

In 2015, 195 countries came together and signed the Paris Climate Agreement. It will reduce climate pollution to manageable levels, thereby avoiding a climate catastrophe. Last year, when our government pulled out of the agreement, we became the only country to renege on its commitment.

And so we turn to the States as our last best hope. It is an extraordinary responsibility. Each of you carries the fate of the world on your shoulders. But this is where we stand today. Let 2018 be the year which future generations look back upon with pride and say: "This legislature stood up with so many others to protect us, our planet and future generations. For this we are grateful."

Sincerely,

The Board of the Douglas County Global Warming Coalition

Stuart Liebowitz	Polly Stirling	Neal Hadley	Arthur Chaput
Melanie Mackinnon	Amy Nathanson	Dick Dolgonas	Ruth Kaser