

February 7, 2018

House Committee on Energy and Environment
Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
900 Court St. NE- HR F
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: HB 4001

Chairs Helm and Dembrow, Vice-Chairs Power, Reschke and Olsen, and members of the committee, we appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony today in support of HB 4001.

Climate change endangers the health of our communities by threatening clean air, clean water, healthy food, and the neighborhoods that are home to Oregon residents. Wildfire, heat, changing landscapes, and extreme weather all have implications for our wellbeing. Among the health problems caused or exacerbated by climate change include heat-related illness, respiratory disease, injuries from extreme weather, diseases carried by ticks and mosquitos, and both temporary and long-term displacement.^{1,2}

We are experiencing health impacts from climate change in Multnomah County.

Coinciding with extreme temperatures, the Eagle Creek fire caused evacuations, anxiety, and extremely poor air quality. With many school buildings lacking air conditioning, health department staff fielded questions from community members and school officials asking whether to open windows or allow children to wait outside for the school bus. They were faced with a terrible choice of exposing kids to heat or exposing them to smoke. Resources to build resilience could help us cope with situations like this in the future. Climate change demands adaptive strategies, such as equipping schools and hospitals with upgraded HVAC systems that protect vulnerable groups from both smoke and heat.

We know that our most vulnerable neighbors are being hit first and worst. Mounting evidence shows that low income households and communities of color are more affected by climate impacts and have fewer resources to cope. Children and older adults face disproportionate risk from heat waves, air pollution, infectious disease, and trauma.^{1,3} Whether

¹ Oregon Climate and Health Profile Report. Oregon Health Authority Public Health Division; 2014.
<http://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/HEALTHYENVIRONMENTS/CLIMATECHANGE/Documents/oregon-climate-and-health-profile-report.pdf>. Accessed February 2018.

² Crimmins A, Balbus J, Gamble JL, et al., Eds. The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States: A Scientific Assessment (2016). Washington, DC: U.S. Global Change Research Program; 2016. doi: 10.7930/JOR49NQX

³ Luber G, Knowlton K, Balbus J, et al. Ch. 9: Human Health. Climate Change Impacts in the United States: The Third National Climate Assessment (2014). J. M. Melillo, T.C. Richmond, and G. W. Yohe, Eds., U.S. Global Change Research Program; 2014: 220-256. doi:10.7930/J0PN93H5.

waiting for transit in the heat or missing work to care for a child with asthma, we know that climate change has direct and indirect effects on the livelihoods and wellbeing of vulnerable populations.

Actions that protect the climate also improve health and community resilience. Some of the actions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions have important community co-benefits. In addition to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, providing access to safe, active transportation options can increase physical activity and reduce local air pollution.^{4,5} Food systems that support local agriculture and plant-based diets can reduce emissions, improve nutrition, and build stronger community ties. Investments in low income home weatherization reduces the burden of utility costs and helps maintain healthy indoor temperatures during heat events. These actions also help to reduce chronic diseases that are the leading causes of death in Oregon, such as heart disease and cancer.

Climate policies rooted in environmental justice can reduce social inequities while protecting the planet. In addition to suffering the brunt of impacts from climate change, communities suffering from economic and social injustice today are likely to continue to be left behind during a transition to a clean, low carbon economy.⁶ Entrenched inequities in our system will continue to perpetuate unless specifically addressed in climate policy by prioritizing protections for and investments in low income communities and communities of color. The transition to clean, low carbon industries and sources of energy must create pathways for all members of our communities to benefit from the resulting jobs and innovations. And the risks posed by this transition to vulnerable communities and workers must be carefully addressed.

Clean Energy Jobs is right for Oregon. The legislation under consideration addresses the complexity of the issues outlined and can provide lasting positive impacts for all communities in our state. We recommend that the final legislation follow the path of HB 4001 by requiring utilities to purchase all compliance allowances to ensure a clear carbon price signal in Oregon, and consigning allowances to utilities for the benefit of ratepayers at levels proportionate with need, declining with each utility's emissions cap. Consignment proceeds must be used to hold low income ratepayers harmless, and as existing low income ratepayer programs may be insufficient to achieve this, we urge that a low income rate class or a percentage of income payment program be established in the implementation of the bill as a means of protecting low income rate payers. In addition, the final bill should limit the use of offsets for compliance while requiring that half or more of the offsets used directly benefit Oregonians. Finally, we recommend that you expand the purview of the well thought out Program Advisory Committee to include the breadth of the legislation, including the designation of impacted communities (Section 18) and the investment of auction proceeds (Sections 22 through 32). Clear, consistent

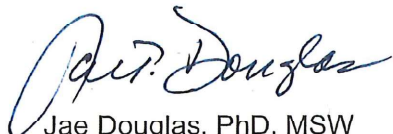
⁴ Haines A, McMichael AJ, Smith KR, et al. Public health benefits of strategies to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions: overview and implications for policy makers. *Lancet*. 2009 Dec 19;374(9707):2104-14. doi: 10.1016/S0140-6736(09)61759-1.

⁵ Chang KM, Hess JJ, Balbus JM, et al. Ancillary health effects of climate mitigation scenarios as drivers of policy uptake: a review of air quality, transportation and diet co-benefits modeling studies. *Environ. Res. Lett.*; 12 (2017): 113001. doi: 10.1088/1748-9326/aa8f7b.

⁶ Finley-Brook M & Holloman EL. Empowering Energy Justice. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2016 Sep; 13(9): 926.

oversight in the program development and implementation by low income communities and communities of color is critical for ensuring that the bill is supporting a just transition. Similarly, local governments are best positioned to be responsive to the specific needs of their communities, and therefore ask that you ensure that additional local action is not preempted by this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony.



Jae Douglas, PhD, MSW
Environmental Health Services Director
Multnomah County Health Department



John Wasiutynski
Office of Sustainability Director
Multnomah County