



February 22, 2018

House Democratic Leader Jennifer Williamson, Chair
House Committee on Rules

Re: Environment Oregon supports House Bill 4001 and Senate Bill 1507

Dear Chair Williamson and Members of the Committees,

Environment Oregon supports House Bill 4001 and Senate Bill 1507 known collectively as “Clean Energy Jobs.”

Environment Oregon is a statewide, citizen-based environmental advocacy organization working for clean air, clean water and open space. We have tens of thousands of members from all corners of the state who have made it clear that they are ready for Oregon to take strong action in the fight against climate change.

Years ago, many of us thought of global warming as something that would happen “someday.” As it turns out, “someday” is now.

Since 2000, we’ve experienced [16 of the 17 warmest years](#) on record — including 2016, the hottest year ever recorded. As the oceans warm, we’re learning that it’s no longer a question of if the [Antarctic ice sheet](#) will melt, but how fast.

We’re fast approaching the point when scientists say climate change could tip toward catastrophe, with [sea levels](#) rising faster along our coasts, and [storms](#) growing more powerful, and droughts and other forms of extreme weather more disruptive.

Nobody, of course, wants to leave the next generation a world where heat waves, floods, droughts and worse are the normal, everyday events in an increasingly dangerous world. The good news is that we still have some time to stave off the worst, and we know exactly what we need to do: act quickly and boldly to reduce carbon pollution.

If we accept, as we must, the broad scientific consensus that our pollution is accelerating these changes, then this is our challenge: to stop putting carbon into our air, and to repower our society with clean, renewable energy such as solar, wind and energy efficiency.

The Clean Energy Jobs bill accomplishes two important tasks: it sets ambitious targets for carbon pollution reduction, putting us in compliance with the Paris Climate Agreement and the Clean Power Plan, and forces big polluters to pay, providing funding for programs that will help Oregon reduce and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

This type of program is a proven way to limit dangerous pollution. For example, nine Northeastern and Mid-Atlantic states from Maryland to Maine [just strengthened a similar program](#) to cut emissions from power plants. [The new rules](#) will cut pollution in the Northeast by at least two-thirds below 2005 levels by 2030, generate billions of dollars to fund important clean energy programs, and provide widespread benefits for people across the region.

Now it's Oregon's turn to act. We have already set a carbon reduction goal of 75% below 1990 levels by 2050, have joined the United States Climate Alliance and committed to other states and the rest of the world that we will hit these carbon reduction goals. Clean Energy Jobs gives us a path to fulfill that commitment. Oregon is not a global leader in carbon emissions, but we can be a global leader in helping to solve the climate crisis.

We are, after all, a state of pioneers. From the passage of the Bottle Bill and public beaches to the more recent coal to clean law, Oregon has been at the forefront of many environmental advancements. Passing the Clean Energy Jobs bill will make Oregon a leader in the fight against climate change, one of the most important and pressing issues of our time.

Environment Oregon urges the swift passage of Clean Energy Jobs this legislative session. We can't afford to wait.

Sincerely,

Celeste Meiffren-Swango
State Director, Environment Oregon