

From: [Zach Amittay](#)
To: [SENR Exhibits](#)
Subject: Jaime Athos Op-Ed In Support of an Oregon Carbon Pricing Program
Date: Friday, January 17, 2020 3:43:35 PM
Attachments: [TofurkyOpEd.pdf](#)

Dear Senators,

On behalf of E2 business leader Jaime Athos, CEO of Tofurky in Hood River, I submit the attached Portland Business Journal Op-Ed he authored in support of a Cap-and-Invest carbon pricing program for Oregon. I've also linked the Op-Ed below.

<https://www.bizjournals.com/portland/news/2019/04/25/viewpoint-the-ceo-of-tofurky-on-why-cap-and-invest.html>

Thank you, and on behalf of Mr. Athos: pass a strong Cap-and-Invest carbon pricing program!

Respectfully,

ZACH AMITTAY

Advocate

[E2](#) | [Environmental Entrepreneurs](#)

[E2.ORG](#) | [FACEBOOK.COM/E2.ORG](#) | [TWITTER.COM/E2ORG](#)



**Good for the Economy.
Good for the Environment.**

Viewpoint: The CEO of Tofurky on why cap and invest is good for rural Oregon manufacturers

Apr 25, 2019, 3:19pm PDT

By Jamie Athos, CEO of Tofurky, based in Hood River

Tofurky-maker Turtle Islands Foods in 2009 invested in a new LEED Platinum building that has helped the Hood River food manufacturer slash energy costs and add jobs.

As the CEO of a food manufacturing company in Hood River, I want rural Oregon's manufacturers to succeed. I want companies like mine to be able to expand and hire more workers. This legislative session, lawmakers in Salem can help businesses achieve these goals by passing [the HB 2020 cap-and-invest bill](#).

My company, Tofurky, makes plant-based meat substitutes. We've been fortunate in bucking the downward trend in rural Oregon manufacturing jobs – which declined about 40 percent from 1990 to 2016. By the end of 2018, our workforce had grown to 190 employees and we added another year of double-digit revenue growth to our books.

A big reason for this growth is the fact that our products, once niche and found only in specialty shops, are becoming mainstream. Tofurky products are now available in more than 4,000 Walmart stores domestically and on six continents.

Adopting a longer-term view has been another big reason why our company has been able to create year-round living-wage employment opportunities in a rural Oregon county. The return on the investments we have made in energy efficiency and renewable energy support our growth and add to our bottom line. And these are exactly the kinds of investments HB 2020 will help finance.

Alongside Interstate 84 near downtown Hood River, our company owns and operates three buildings totaling more than 100,000 square feet. Our production processes require lots of energy, from refrigerating tofu, to mixing dough in powerful blenders, to quickly moving deli slices along production lines.

In 2009, we set out to cut our energy costs. We invested in [a new building, built to a LEED-platinum standard](#) with energy efficient features like [400 rooftop solar panels](#). We installed a more efficient HVAC system. We built passive lighting portals and purchased high-efficiency boilers that generate steam for cooking and high-efficiency refrigeration equipment to chill our products.

As we expand our payroll, our clean energy investments continually help underpin our strong financial position. Combined, these investments save us 40 to 50 percent annually on our energy bills. They hedge our costs against any unexpected fluctuations in volatile energy markets. And the benefits of our clean energy investments extend to our community. During the construction of our LEED-platinum building, we helped create about 105 local jobs outside our company.

If HB 2020 passes, more rural Oregon manufacturers could benefit by investing the bill's proceeds in similar energy upgrades. This saves companies money over the long haul, freeing up capital to grow operations and create jobs. Even when they're not in-house, these jobs matter to rural communities. Just think about the installers who drilled solar panel racking onto our Hood River rooftop, or the HVAC technicians who installed our duct work.

According to the national business group E2 (Environmental Entrepreneurs), there are now 55,000 clean energy jobs in Oregon, with more than half located outside metro Portland. And according to a report commissioned by the Oregon Carbon Policy Office, HB 2020 could create 50,000 additional jobs across multiple industries, with disproportionately higher rates of employment and income growth occurring in more rural counties.

In the state's agricultural supply chain, I've seen countless rural Oregon trucking companies, logistics businesses, refrigerated depots and brightly lit warehouses ripe for energy efficiency and renewable energy upgrades. To understand the opportunity, consider California. Thanks to its own successful cap-and-invest program, about \$57 million has been set aside for investments in carbon emission-reduction projects – and that's in the largely rural food production industry alone.

My support for HB 2020 stems from my manufacturing company's own positive experiences with energy efficiency and renewable energy. Clean energy works for my company, and I know it can work for other manufacturers and employers across rural Oregon too, regardless of what industry they're in.

By helping Oregon manufacturers invest in clean energy, HB 2020 can help create – and sustain – the kinds of good, rural jobs our state so desperately needs. That's why lawmakers must pass HB 2020 this session.