

**From:** [Roberta Richards](#)  
**To:** [SENR Exhibits](#)  
**Subject:** support for strong cap and trade legislation  
**Date:** Sunday, January 19, 2020 9:01:32 PM

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As a parent and community college librarian, I am writing in support of LC 19, assuming that it can be amended to ensure real reductions to our state's carbon footprint. I also support substantial assistance to rural parts of the state during the transition away from fossil fuels, but we must recognize that this transition is necessary.

As a librarian, I deal in facts, and the facts are clear. The climate crisis is in its early stages, and we're already seeing devastating harms, most recently catastrophic fires in Australia. Our nation bears primary responsibility for the accumulation of greenhouse gasses currently in the atmosphere, and has a higher per-capita carbon footprint than almost any other nation. The damage our nation has done and continues to do is currently being felt most acutely by other nations which did very little to create this crisis, such as the Marshall Islanders whose homelands are being flooded and the residents of drought-stricken countries in Africa and Central America.

The current harms are nothing compared to the unimaginable disruptions that future generations of all nations, including our own, will endure. We are getting perilously close to a tipping point when the effects of warming are amplified. The magnifiers that terrify me most are the pockets of methane, an extremely potent greenhouse gas, that will be released as polar ice continues to melt. The scientists who stare these facts in the face every day are experiencing symptoms of PTSD from the trauma of seeing of the future we are creating.

The youth and young adults of Oregon have woken up to the threat that climate change poses to their future. These youth live with grief and fear about what their lives will be like in a few decades. They are bewildered and enraged by the failure of adults to do the hard work of implementing change to provide them the bare basics of a habitable planet. If Oregon legislature fails to accept its moral duty to address the climate crisis, then young and urban voters will have no choice but to unite and pass legislation through ballot initiatives. I hope that this ballot legislation will assist those most affected by the transition, but there are no guarantees, and laws passed through citizen initiatives are often blunt instruments.

If urban and rural Oregon legislators can work together, a path to a more stable future can be hammered out. If this process fails, everyone will lose, with our children and grandchildren enduring the greatest loss.

Thank you,  
Roberta Richards, Ph.D., M.L.I.S.  
Portland

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“The more clearly we can focus our attention on the wonders and realities of the universe about us, the less taste we shall have for destruction.” – Rachel Carson