



Senate Environment and Natural Resource Committee  
senr.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

January 29, 2020

Dear Committee:

**Bill Harvey**

Commission Chair  
bharvey@bakercounty.org

Baker County cannot stress enough the economic hardships the passing of the Greenhouse Gas Initiative – HB 4159, SB 1530 (GGI, Carbon, and Cap & Trade) would cause, not only to the County, but to our citizens.

One example: Ashgrove Cement operates a plant in Durkee, approximately 24 miles south of Baker City. The business employs 150 people that live primarily in Baker City, Huntington, and Ontario. Should the GGI pass, the County will lose \$1M in tax revenues from the Plant which will severely limit our services, including schools, road maintenance, law enforcement and emergency personnel. Even worse, the families of the 150 Cement plant personnel will lose good paying jobs. In our rural economy, every job lost has a ripple effect (7) times-over! At an approximate wage of \$80K/employee, that is a loss of \$12M, *before* the ripple effect. Simply, if Ashgrove closes, Baker County's economy will be devastated.

Please, do not be fooled into thinking that off-setting the time-line for GGI implementation will make even the least bit of difference. Most of our fuel comes from out of the state. Therefore, our fuel costs will go up immediately upon passage, the same as they will in the metropolitan areas. Increased costs for electricity, vehicle fuels, propane, and natural gas will be exorbitantly high for all citizens, but will hurt those on limited incomes the most. Residents cannot be forced to choose between eating or heating our homes due to high fuel costs. Our rural county has not seen the economic revival that the urban counties have and the implementation of the GGI, Carbon, and Cap & Trade proposals will ensure that we won't have a chance.

These bills also require Oregon citizens to be aligned with multiple other states laws and regulations. This is wrong in every way.

The proposed increase in funding for wildfires will not benefit Baker County. Federal agencies manage 51.5% of the land, comprising a total of 1,016,511 acres and are not under the responsibility of the Oregon Department of Forestry. Merely, 10,000 acres are managed by the State of Oregon, and that includes all Departments, not just Forestry.

The County is strongly opposed to all forms of this legislation until the Legislature completes thorough environmental and economic studies for the County. The studies must be completed *with* the County in a coordination process, and not *for* the County by an outside agency without local input.

There will not be support for any legislation relating to GGI, Carbon, Green Jobs, or Cap and Trade from Baker County unless it is through a vote of the people. There is no emergency and to declare it as such is an abhorrent use of the Emergency Clause. Let the people of Oregon decide.

Sincerely,



Bill Harvey, Chair  
Baker County Commission