

CLEAN ENERGY JOBS BILL (HB2020) WRITTEN TESTIMONY 2-19-2019

The use of fossil fuels is creating the greatest existential crisis humanity has ever faced. We are putting CO₂ into the air 10 times faster than occurred during The Great Dying when 96% of all marine species and 70% of all vertebrate species on land were wiped out.¹ Antarctica ice is melting over 6 times faster than it was in the 1980s.² Half of the world's coral reefs have died in the last 30 years and 90% are expected to die by 2050.³

The IPCC warns that there would be a climate catastrophe from only a 1.5 degree increase in global temperature, and we are on track for a 3 or 4 degree increase this century.⁴

In 2017 U.S. LNG exports quadrupled.⁵ In 2018 they quintupled, and they are expected to rise rapidly for decades.⁶ Proponents of fracked gas try to greenwash this by saying that burning gas creates only half as much CO₂, and then claiming a leakage rate below 3%. However, a 2014 study based on satellite data from a 2 year period estimated leakage to be 12%.⁷ Other recent studies have shown rates of 9 to 17%.⁸

When the leakage rate is over 3% any climate benefit from burning gas instead of coal is negated.⁹ If the gas is used in vehicles it's negated when the rate is over 1.4%.¹⁰

In Asia alone, there are 1,200 coal-fired power plants either under construction or in the planning stages, so it's unlikely that any reduction in coal will be achieved with fracked gas.¹¹

The Oregon legislature has delayed taking really significant action to deal with the problem of global warming for years. Drastic action should have been taken long ago. It may now be too late to avoid crossing a crucial tipping point in global warming. This bill may be too little and too late, however, any action that reduces greenhouse gas emissions counts, so I urge the Oregon legislature to pass this bill in the strongest form possible, with the earliest implementation possible and with the greatest safeguards against it being weakened during rule making or by subsequent lobbying efforts by the fossil fuel industry and their advocates. Don't be fooled by their decades-long sophisticated misinformation campaign.

Alan Smith

- 1) <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/11/26/how-extreme-weather-is-shrinking-the-planet>
- 2) https://www.washingtonpost.com/energy-environment/2019/01/14/ice-loss-antarctica-has-sextupled-since-s-new-research-finds/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.f78e67e4dd6c
- 3) <https://www.independent.co.uk/environment/environment-90-percent-coral-reefs-die-2050-climate-change-bleaching-pollution-a7626911.html>
- 4) <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>
- 5) <https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=35512>
- 6) <https://www.forbes.com/sites/chuckdevore/2018/05/14/u-s-liquefied-natural-gas-exports-just-quadrupled-its-good-for-the-economy-national-security/#3467eb9927b5>
- 7) https://www.eeb.cornell.edu/howarth/publications/f_EECT-61539-perspectives-on-air-emissions-of-methane-and-climatic-warmin_100815_27470.pdf
- 8) <http://www.pnas.org/content/111/17/6237>,
<https://agupubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/2014EF000265>,
<https://agupubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/grl.50811>
- 9) <https://www.pnas.org/content/109/17/6435>

- 10) <https://www.edf.org/climate-impacts-methane-emissions>
- 11) <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/24/climate/coal-global-warming.html>