

I am a native Oregonian and rightly proud of my state. From preserving public access to our ocean beaches to the landmark 1971 bottle bill, Oregon has led the way in preserving the environment for current and future generations.

With House Bill 2020 Oregonians have the opportunity—indeed the imperative—to lead the way once again.

We cannot wait for the federal government to act. The world's leading climate scientists have warned: we only have 12 years for global warming to be kept to a maximum of 1.5 Celsius. Beyond this level, even half a degree will significantly worsen the risk of drought, floods, extreme heat, and poverty for millions of people.

The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has asserted that “urgent and unprecedented changes” are needed to reach The 1.5 Celsius target.

House Bill 2020 is just such an unprecedented and urgent change. If passed, it would be the beginning of a thoughtful and humane transition to a green economy and a model for other states.

As I listened to the testimony provided by those opposed to House bill 2020 in Medford February 23, I was struck that most people were either afraid they would lose their jobs or that the cost of energy would rise and strain their monthly budgets.

These are understandable concerns. While HB 2020 does indeed have provisions to lessen the adverse impact on households, businesses, and workers, I urge that as we move forward these provisions in the bill be safeguarded and strengthened. These people have been largely forgotten in the economic policies and changes of the last 30 years, and they are afraid they will be forgotten again.

I urge the passing of House Bill 2020. And I commit myself to champion the cause of those adversely affected by this bill.

Teresa Brain