

To The Joint Interim Committee on Carbon Reduction:

Please register our opposition to HB 2020. We are actual stakeholders in this process, as our family will be directly affected by this legislation. There are many purported “stakeholders” who will be addressing the Committee (in this case, environmental advocacy groups and climate NGO’s) in an attempt to facilitate pre-determined outcomes, but they will not feel the actual impact of this bill’s implementation. We think that this legislation is very dangerous, as it paves the way for more draconian and expensive measures in the years to come.

As residents of Southern Oregon, we find it laughable that so much effort and expense is being used to fight a colorless, odorless and essentially non-toxic gas that comprises a minute portion of the atmosphere, while folks living in this region choke on toxic wildfire smoke for several months each year. Wildfire smoke that is primarily caused by poor forest management and misguided suppression policies. Where are the priorities?

HB 2020 will punish Oregonians for their very existence, and at worst - it threatens our way of life. It is a harm being perpetrated on the citizens of Oregon, and it could be seen as an abdication of the Legislature’s fiduciary responsibility to the residents of the state.

The ironically-named “Carbon Reduction Committee” itself creates a bit of cognitive dissonance, in that we are carbon-based beings living on a carbon-based planet. What is the ultimate level of “carbon reduction” the Committee intends to achieve? We think that the use of the term “carbon” without modification is intentionally misleading, conjuring images of toxicity and pollution. Carbon - black, dirty.

Not everyone believes that the climate debate is over, or that it’s “settled science.” We are very skeptical concerning the impact of carbon dioxide emissions on the climate, and we’re very concerned about the alarmism and hysteria being used to advance radical and destructive policies such as the “Green New Deal,” and HB 2020. As far as we’re concerned, the science is far from settled, and it’s been essentially “bought and paid for” by governing bodies who are keen on crafting this type of legislation. We’re going to “fight” climate change by crippling our economy and reducing our standard of living? That doesn’t make any sense! The argument that this bill will help Oregon’s economy by creating thousands of “green energy jobs” is not convincing, especially given the history of these efforts at the federal level (Solyndra, etc.). The private sector needs to create jobs via free markets, not through government coercion.

Proponents of this legislation will counter that the impact of climate change on their industries exceeds the cost of this legislation, but where is the proof? Where is the proof that the costs of this legislation will be offset by the benefits of an “improved” climate - if such a thing can even be achieved?

HR 2020 will cost hard working Oregonians hundreds of millions of dollars in additional costs for fuel, transportation, food, and just about all other goods and services purchased within the state. It's a job-killing piece of legislation that will have a devastating impact on those at the lower end of the economic spectrum. It's an attack on rural Oregonians, and it unfairly penalizes certain energy sectors.

Sadly, the additional costs that result from this legislation will do nothing to mitigate global climate change - this is borne out by testimony from the Director of Oregon State University's Climate Change Research Institute. Oregon emits an infinitesimal amount of CO2 into the atmosphere - 0.14% of total global emissions. What guarantee will we receive that this legislation will do anything to inhibit climate change or improve our quality of life? What benefits will we citizens receive in return for this harm?

HB 2020 amounts to a massive wealth transfer from hard working citizens to politically-favored industries. Hundreds of millions of dollars will flow into government coffers, with little or no oversight or citizen input as to how the funds will be spent. This bill will create yet another unelected bureaucracy (Oregon Climate Authority), which will only increase the already onerous burden of government intrusion and regulation. It also consolidates even more power into an untrustworthy and seemingly incompetent executive branch. Government intrusion and control needs to be reduced, not expanded!

HB 2020 will damage Oregon's economy in ways we can't even imagine. The economy of rural Oregon is already impacted due to restrictions on resource extraction - why on earth would we cripple it further with this senseless legislation? We're also facing a shortage of hundreds of megawatts of electricity on the state grid, which in itself will drive up electricity prices - HB 2020 will only make this worse! We should be expanding our energy production portfolio, not creating scarcity with "cap and tax" measures.

HB 2020 will create a contrived market of carbon credits and allowances, further enriching state coffers and wealthy individuals who are able to participate in carbon "auctions." With that in mind, and given the fact that this legislation will have essentially no impact on the climate, we're left to believe that it's nothing but a money and power grab.

If HB 2020 is made law, Oregon will be at a competitive disadvantage with states who have not foolishly instituted such punitive measures on their industries.

We do not dispute that the climate is changing. It has been changing for millennia - long before the advent of humans and industrialization. We need to adapt to the changing climate, and the challenges it presents. We also need to continue to reduce real emissions and pollution over time.

At the same time, cheap and abundant energy is the hallmark of a prosperous economy. A prosperous economy will provide the revenue needed to implement climate adaptation measures and facilitate further emissions reductions - without the need for punitive legislation. HB 2020 runs counter to this

model, by diminishing prosperity - creating energy scarcity, killing jobs and reducing the standard of living. HB 2020 will also burden Oregonians with massive government intervention and control over energy production and consumption; transportation, and other important aspects of their daily lives.

Please do not pass this damaging and dangerous legislation. Thank you for your consideration.

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