

Testimony given February 18, 2019
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Sen Dembrow, Rep Powers, Committee on Carbon Reduction,

Thank you for your diligence and for inviting us to this hearing. I'm Donna Murphy, a retired Portland Public Schools teacher from NE Portland. Five years ago I read an alarming climate change report and became a climate change activist.

Two years ago I wrote a grant and got some money to do an original climate change opera class with some East Multnomah County 5th graders. With my help they wrote, produced, and performed their own opera entitled, "Climate Change, the Opera."

A line from their script: "People created this problem, and people can solve it." The recent IPCC report agrees, but only if we immediately and aggressively get busy. That's why we're here today.

As I was starting up the opera class, I prepared myself for some climate denial from students or parents or administrators; but I didn't hear a peep. Just the opposite: adults and kids told me they liked knowing more about something so important. A recent poll supports my experience, saying only 9% of Americans deny climate science now. What I think is this 9% is way too overrepresented in government action and inaction on this topic.

The kids in the opera jumped into science lessons about climate, carbon cycles, and greenhouse gas emissions. At 5th grade, they showed they were too young to participate in some of America's alienation from important institutions like science, education, and even government. That current skepticism is dangerous to our species' survival right now when we actually need the group strength of all our important institutions. Like you.

Yesterday in the title to a climate piece, the New York Times wrote, "It's time to panic." They explained that educated panic will create important action now. You all, with the sanction of our institution of government, are tasked with turning our rightful alarm into a bill that uses scientific research to at long last hold polluters accountable and put our state on the right track.

So, HB 2020: I know it can't be perfect, but right off the plate let's attack those carbon reductions — 55% reduction by 2035 and 100% by 2050. Allowances phased out by 2030. All major polluters subject to carbon caps, no exemptions — looking at you, Jordan Cove.

Corporate polluters and profiteers and the 9% of deniers urge you in one direction. But states and nations, the IPCC, my grandchildren, and the kids in that climate opera are paying attention, too, and asking you to do the right thing, pass the strongest bill you can and help pull us away from the edge.

You know what to do. Thank you for what you do. Children and deniers and polluters and humans and the earth need your yes vote on the strongest bill possible.