

Co-chairs Dembrow and Power, and members of the Joint Committee on Carbon Reduction,

My name is Teresa Welch, and I live in rural Benton County, south of Philomath. I'm writing in support of HB 2020, the Clean Energy Jobs bill.

Carbon pollution is costing the state government money, through increased expenditures on health care and fighting wildfires, for example. I don't like to see the government spending my tax dollars unnecessarily. If we're serious about fiscal responsibility, we should get serious about reducing the government expenditures that result from carbon pollution.

Furthermore, I want to see people take responsibility for their own actions and not expect government to cover for them. A carbon price forces those who pollute to pay for the damage they do rather than shifting the costs to the rest of us through higher taxes.

I've heard many arguments that this bill will lead to economic ruin in Oregon. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Ten states have already successfully implemented cap-and-invest programs. These states have demonstrated that such programs can lead to growing economies, falling CO₂ emissions, stable energy prices, and thousands of jobs created.

Climate change is an existential threat for many businesses right here in Oregon. Our farmers face invasive pests, drought, and heat waves. Outdoor recreation companies are threatened by wildfire, low river levels, and declining snowpack. Foresters see declining forest health and increased wildfire risk. These are not some vague, distant threats that will affect far-away people in some distant future. They're happening today right in our state, and they threaten the economic vitality of our rural communities. We need to act now.

Thank you,

Teresa Welch