

Thank you to the members of the Joint Committee on Carbon Reduction.

I did not get a chance to speak at the Hearing on February 23 in Medford, although I was there for the full extended four hours. I appreciate a chance to still be able to share my written thoughts with you.

My name is Rev. Elizabeth Olson. I live in Talent, OR. I am an interfaith minister and serve as a clinical chaplain. I am for HB2020, although I would prefer to have mandated reductions in emissions rather than a market-based solution to a market-driven problem. However, we are so very late to the call and we need to take the swiftest, wisest action that we can NOW. This bill is what we have. We cannot wait another year to mull it over.

I would like to share a quote with you: *“There is an urgent need to develop policies so that, in the next few years, the emission of carbon dioxide and other highly polluting gases can be drastically reduced, for example, substituting for fossil fuels and developing sources of renewable energy.”*

Was this scribed by a radical environmental activist? No.

Was this beseechingly cried out by a bleeding heart liberal at a Jordan Cove pipeline rally? No.

This was written by Pope Francis in his 2015 *Laudato Si* a 184-page document (Encyclical), a sort of eco-edict addressing “Care for Our Common Home.”

But lest you think these are just concerns of one of the most progressive Popes in history, his more conservative predecessor Benedict XVI, in 2007 proposed *“eliminating the structural causes of the dysfunctions of the world economy and correcting models of growth which have proved incapable of ensuring respect for the environment”*.¹

Before him Saint John Paul II in 1991 foresaw the need for a sweeping paradigm shift in the Western world's growth model: *“Every effort to protect and improve our world entails profound changes in 'lifestyles, models of production and consumption, and the established structures of power which today govern societies.’”*²

And before him as far back as 1971 Pope Paul VI foresaw the looming ecological imbalance and crisis: *“Due to an ill-considered exploitation of nature, humanity runs the risk of destroying it and becoming in turn a victim of this degradation” ...an “ecological catastrophe under the effective explosion of industrial civilization.”*

These are some of humanity's most profound moral and ethical thinkers who have been trying to lead us away from the very crisis we have driven ourselves straight into. For decades they have been calling for deep change! They also share a fierce protective mission for the most vulnerable, and I hope that you will too – making sure there is **strict oversight** to ensure the programs that benefit those communities in Oregon that will suffer from the transition to renewables. As we saw at the hearing in Medford, some of those frightened communities are the booing “yellow vests” who were inaccurately baited with fear-mongering disinformation, yet whose fears can be addressed through education as to the features of the bill that are precisely intended to serve them.

Going forward with this bill I would propose a couple of specific restraints. Forgive me if these are already in place, as I have only been able to read summaries of HB2020.

1. A carefully determined allocation of permits from the start so that the value does not fluctuate so wildly as to lose their value, nor allow this to turn into a profit scheme for corporations.
2. No banking the unused permits from one year to the next which would slow the down the goal.

Thank you for your commitment to serve and for caring for our common home.



1 *Address to the Diplomatic Corps Accredited to the Holy See* (8 January 2007): *AAS* 99 (2007), 72

2 Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1 May 1991), 58: *AAS* 83 (1991), p. 863.

3 Apostolic Letter *Octogesima Adveniens* (14 May 1971), 21: *AAS* 63 (1971), 416-417.