



To: Co-chairs Dembrow and Power and Members of the Committee

From Robin McKenzie, Talent, OR

My name is Robin McKenzie and I am owner of Rockbird Gardens, a small landscape firm in Talent.

I strongly do not support HB 2020.

As a retiree, I am living on a fixed income. I started a small business to be able to pay my property taxes and for things like medical emergencies. Most of my clients are also retired women living on Social Security or pensions. My landscapes encourage replacing water-guzzling lawn with native and non-native cultivars that benefit pollinators. I purchase only from independent nurseries throughout the Rogue Valley. Many of these plants come from Monrovia, one of the largest in the US. They, as well as ALL Oregon nurseries use clean, reliable and safe NATURAL GAS to heat their greenhouses. When their costs increase, my costs will increase, and that means my clients will have to pay more. As with all businesses, there is a breaking point at which one begins to lose customers. Between this and the smoke, which killed my business last summer, the rise in gas prices needed for my workers to transport our tools, soil, compost, etc. to our jobsites, your scheme will be a hardship for all of us.

In addition, may I just say that when I looked for a place to retire I chose Oregon for its beauty and affordability. I naturally assumed that my representatives would honor their fiduciary obligation to do no harm to the people of this state. Unfortunately, I can see a time in the not-too-distant future when I will have to choose between paying for medicine, food or heating my home. Neither I nor any of my retired friends are in a financial position to be able to move to another, more welcoming state. I hope that you will rethink imposing this punitive legislation on all of us.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my opinion.

