

Dear Senator Dembrow and committee,

My name is Paige Hines. I was born in the middle of Eugene, Oregon at Sacred Heart Hospital, grew up in the Willamette Valley, and have a little hippie in me that shows once in a while. I now call Eastern Oregon home and have for 15 years now. My husband and I started a small business in 2016 in LaGrande, and I'm writing you today because I am very concerned about the consequences of HB2020 for our business, our regional economy, and, consequently, the mental health of those affected. I'm not writing to sling mud at you, attack your personal character, or really even talk politics. I'm writing to plea with you regarding HB2020.

I don't believe that we can usually solve moral issues with laws, only create a little social order. So I am going to approach this from a moral, ethical perspective. And I'm willing to bet even if we don't have the same values (which I am not assuming I know the answer to), that you certainly view HB2020 from an ethical viewpoint as well. If we consider that HB2020 is an effort out of ethical obligation, and probably some fear, to prevent an environmental catastrophe, should we not consider the death of a regional economy from an ethical standpoint as well? To be clear, I understand that if a global environmental catastrophe were to occur, no one will care anymore about their local economy. The truth is my husband and I very much care to steward our land well. We don't appreciate something as small as trash left out on public lands, destroying the beauty and pristine of the landscape. How much more infinitely we do care about an environmental catastrophe! I acknowledge that there are probably many conservatives and liberals alike who have either stuck their head in the sand or chose to not care or become informed to potential global warming for many reasons. And they may be more concerned about economic growth or protecting their way of life than becoming informed or responsible, and more so, been unwilling to "reach across the aisle" because it's a cause from the other side.

Well, I'm writing you today to reach across the aisle and ask you to hear me please. I believe that the potential death or significant injury to an entire regional economy is not necessary, and should not be taken lightly. I'm suggesting that environmental consequences that we fear are not likely going to happen on Monday, March 11th or even in April of 2019. But the impending vote scheduled for Monday does have some eminent consequences for much of Eastern Oregon and rural Oregon. Is there any way that you may see it fit to postpone the vote to consider further environmental problem solving that may save my home's economy and lifestyle that I do believe to be inherently good? I am asking for a solution that does not quickly kill or significantly injure our economy, an economy that I have much hope for.

As an RN who has spent a couple years working in our county mental health department, and simply as a human being that does not take mental health and wellness or illness as anything to joke about, I want to suggest the primitive notion of just how intrinsically important it is for us as people to be connected to our land and food, and how a lack of purpose in that area can lead down a subtle, slippery path of mental illness. I cannot state how important this is to rural Oregonians. I am aware that HB2020 addresses the aid for lossed jobs and mental health ramifications. However, I'm going to suggest that even the mention of those aids reflects a lack of respect and awareness of the impact on the people affected by the consequences of this bill. If it were your home and way of life that were being threatened, would you not feel like a casualty that was not worth saving? Additionally, I want to state that it's no secret that we are living in an incredibly divided time as a people. And I absolutely believe that we are at far greater risk of suffering from a crack in society due to division and offense (being offended) than we are from economic fallout or environmental emergencies. It's the people that we will fear someday, maybe sooner than later. If was save the planet environmentally but live in sea of mental illness, anger, and danger, will it have been worth it? I believe at this moment that you have an

opportunity to be a hero rather than deepen the divide. How grateful so many of us would be if there was a slowing of this process to reassess. My hope and prayer is that your heart and mind will be open to hearing wisdom, and be willing to reach back across the aisle to me and thousands of others like me. With all the hope and sincerity in the world from one who cares deeply about both sides of the state, thank you for your time and consideration. I don't want to miss the opportunity to extend my contact information if it were ever wanted. My phone number: (541)786-3062 and email: hinesjpja@yahoo.com.

Sincerely,

Paige Hines

Your fellow Oregonian, business owner, RN, wife, mother, daughter