



Joint Committee on Carbon Reductions

jccr.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

Re: HB 2020 Testimony

April 9, 2019

Bill Harvey

Commission Chair

bharvey@bakercounty.org

Dear Members of the Committee:

Baker County would like to express its opposition to HB 2020 as it was originally drafted including the current amendments. This bill will impose crippling financial hardships on virtually all of Eastern Oregon's citizens – its ranchers, farmers, manufacturers, construction companies, retail sales, tourism, and all consumer goods. The Baker County Commission is responsible for representing the citizens of Baker County as well as protect their safety, health, welfare, and economic viability. This bill unfairly restricts our ability to do our jobs.

Remove the emergency clause. The Oregon Constitution gives citizens the right to challenge legislation through referendum. The inclusion of this indefensible clause illustrates that the supporters of the bill do not want those in opposition to have a chance to refer the bill to the voters. This bill effects everyone and everyone should have a say.

As a County based on natural resources, we are committed to excellent environmental stewardship and sustainability. Our farmers and ranchers are at financial risk due to the increased costs of fuel, natural gas, electricity, products they buy to maintain their businesses, there is really no consumer aspect that will remain untouched. There simply is no technology available that allows for a reduction in fuel consumption. There are no 'green fuel' tractors, combines, ATVs, trucks, or other vehicles that are necessary for production. Equipment must be available 24/7/365 to go to work and function in emergencies. Farmers and Ranchers already operate within very tight budgets and this bill will put them at an increased economic disadvantage to those located outside the state. There is no way to recoup losses when the market is already tight and everything must be trucked in and out. Due to the long distance that we travel in Eastern Oregon for our daily lives, this bill will have adverse consequences.

The economic devastation is not limited to the rural areas. The heaviest burden will fall on all Oregon working families, low incomes, fixed incomes, seniors and the disabled. Businesses that choose not to leave the state will have no choice but to pass on the added costs of this taxation to consumers. The increased cost of taxation is not biased – it will not differentiate between urban and rural consumers.

The lack of specificity regarding Oregon's forests and their ability to store carbon is the prime example of deception of climate alarmists. In 2017 it was determined by the OGWC Task Force that Oregon forests produce a net added carbon store of approximately 30 million metric tons. This offset amount is equal to 50% of all other annual emissions by all other reporting sectors of the state. In October 2018, Oregon Department of Forestry verified these findings. If only forests are taken into Oregon's carbon accounting footprint, it is only (1) million metric ton of CO2 shy of meeting the 2035 carbon reduction goals as presented in HB 2020. Oregon's western border is the Pacific Ocean, another huge carbon store and we have thriving rangelands covered in vegetation that also reduce carbon.

Our business community is already being severely burdened with the 2 billion-dollar tax for schools and the other new tax bills coming out of this legislation.

This bill is detrimental to the economy of Baker County and will affect every industry and citizens in our county for the rest of their lives.

HB 2020 is a very complex and technical law, plagued with too many details that have not been developed, but rather left to be determined by unelected bureaucratic regulators to define and implement. Once again, ensuring Oregonians will not get to vote on this new taxation. We are asking that you please vote against this bill.

Sincerely,



Bill Harvey, Chair
Baker County Commission