

**Testimony to the Senate Committee on  
Environment and Natural Resources  
On House Bill 2250**

**April 30, 2019**

**Jana Gastellum, Climate Program Director  
Oregon Environmental Council**

Founded in 1968, the Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization. We advance innovative, collaborative and equitable solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges for today and future generations.

Oregon Environmental Council strongly supports HB 2250.

A generation ago, the federal government passed protective measures that safeguarded clean air and clean water. These protections are fundamental to environmental and public health. They ensure safe drinking water, clean water for species and habitat, clean air and toxic protections necessary for human health and development, and climate protections.

We are in an unprecedented era where we cannot take these protections for granted. Clean air and clean water are the building blocks of a thriving society and strong economy. But today, they are under threat. At the latest count, sixty environmental and public health regulations are being eliminated or rolled back by the federal administration. That is almost ten more than when I testified earlier this session in the House Energy and Environment Committee.

What's at stake for Oregon?

- Packing science advisory committees, like those that set acceptable exposure levels to toxic chemicals, with scientists employed by big industry.
- Loopholes that allow truck manufacturers to install old, polluting diesel engines inside new truck bodies to avoid air quality requirements.
- Millions of tons of greenhouse gases that will be pumped into our air after withdrawing the Clean Power Plan, one of the most ambitious global commitments to reduce climate pollution.
- Increases in mercury emissions—a potent neurotoxin.
- And rollbacks of Clean Car Standards.

Oregon has taken action to halt these rollbacks. The State of Oregon has stood strong and already challenged twenty of the regulations the Trump administration has moved to eliminate or roll back in the courts. For example, our state has filed a lawsuit -- jointly with other states -- against the EPA to keep the Clean Water Rule intact. Why does this matter? Because our state's legacy hinges on world-class lakes, streams, rivers and ocean side.

Similarly, Governor Brown has also worked with other West Coast leaders to oppose efforts to weaken pollution and fuel efficiency rules for cars and trucks. These standards not only cut pollution, but save families money at the pump. Oregon was the second state in the country to adopt these standards, and twelve other states followed. That's the power of state action. However, the EPA's proposed reversal takes America's car industry backwards at exactly the moment it needs to accelerate toward cleaner fuels and electrification.

Basic common sense tells us not to make problems worse. HB 2250 maintains a baseline of protection while still enabling Oregon to adopt more protective standards. A healthy environment and strong economy go hand in hand. Unlike current federal practices, Oregon must also ensure our efforts are designed to protect the most vulnerable amongst us and be based on strong science.

Clean air and clean water matter to all Oregonians, whether urban or rural, rich or poor. The Trump administration's efforts to undo and rollback environmental laws do not align with the values of Oregonians.

Looking forward, there's much more work to be done. We must advance solutions to climate change that transitions us to a thriving clean energy economy. We need states to set stronger standards on toxics, clean transportation, and safe and plentiful water.

Oregon Environmental Council strongly supports HB 2250 and a commitment to defend bedrock laws that protect our environment, natural resources and the health of our families.