

# Senate Joint Memorial 7

Sponsored by Senators GOLDEN, FAGAN, Representatives PRUSAK, MITCHELL, NERON, WILDE, WILLIAMS;  
Senators FREDERICK, PROZANSKI, Representative SMITH WARNER

## SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Urges Congress to enact Green New Deal legislation.

## JOINT MEMORIAL

To the President of the United States and the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled:

We, your memorialists, the Eightieth Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon, in legislative session assembled, respectfully represent as follows:

Whereas on April 22, 2016, world leaders from 175 parties (174 countries and the European Union) recognized the threat of climate change and the urgent need to combat it by signing the Paris Agreement, agreeing to keep warming “well below 2 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels” and to “pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius,” which in itself is not safe for humanity; and

Whereas on October 8, 2018, the United Nations released a special report, criticized by many leading climate scientists as overly conservative, which projected that limiting warming to the unsafe 1.5 degrees Celsius target this century will require an unprecedented transformation of every sector of the global economy over the next 12 years; and

Whereas on November 23, 2018, the U.S. Fourth National Climate Assessment was issued, which detailed the massive threat that climate change poses to the American economy and underscored the need for emergency climate action at all levels of government; and

Whereas the death and destruction already wrought by global warming of approximately 1.1 degrees Celsius above late 19th century levels demonstrates that Earth is already too hot for safety and justice, as attested by rising seas and increased and intensifying wildfires, floods, diseases, droughts and extreme weather; and

Whereas climate change and the global economy's overshoot of ecological limits are driving the sixth mass extinction of species, which has caused a 60 percent decline in global wildlife populations since 1970, could devastate much of life on Earth for the next 10 million years and may pose as great a risk to humanity as climate change, according to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services; and

Whereas the United States has disproportionately contributed to the climate and extinction emergencies and has repeatedly obstructed global efforts to transition toward a green economy, and thus bears an extraordinary responsibility to rapidly address these existential threats; and

Whereas restoring a safe and stable climate requires a “climate mobilization” at all levels of government on a scale not seen since World War II to reach zero greenhouse gas emissions across

**NOTE:** Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter [*italic and bracketed*] is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 all sectors at emergency speed, to rapidly and safely draw down or remove all excess carbon from  
2 the atmosphere, to end the sixth mass extinction of species and to implement measures to protect  
3 all people and species from the increasingly severe consequences of climate change; and

4 Whereas a “Green New Deal” has been proposed that would be a sweeping overhaul of the  
5 economy, with equity and justice at the core of its solutions; and

6 Whereas like the original New Deal, which was President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s strategy  
7 to combat the national crisis of the Great Depression, the Green New Deal is ambitious, necessary  
8 and possible to achieve; and

9 Whereas the Green New Deal would dramatically expand existing renewable power sources and  
10 deploy new production capacity with the goal of meeting 100 percent of national power demand  
11 through renewable sources and building a national energy efficient “smart” grid; and

12 Whereas the Green New Deal would upgrade every residential and industrial building for  
13 state-of-the-art energy efficiency, comfort and safety; and

14 Whereas the Green New Deal would eliminate greenhouse gas emissions from manufacturing,  
15 agricultural and other industries, including by investing in local-scale agriculture in communities  
16 across the country; and

17 Whereas the Green New Deal would repair and improve transportation and other infrastructure  
18 and upgrade water infrastructure to ensure universal access to clean water; and

19 Whereas the Green New Deal would fund massive investment in the drawdown of greenhouse  
20 gases and make “green” technology, industry, expertise, products and services a major export of the  
21 United States, with the aim of becoming the undisputed international leader in helping other coun-  
22 tries transition to completely greenhouse gas neutral economies and bringing about a global Green  
23 New Deal; and

24 Whereas the term “just transition” is a framework for a fair shift to an economy that is  
25 ecologically sustainable, equitable and just for all its members; and

26 Whereas just-transition strategies were first forged by a “blue-green” alliance of labor unions  
27 and environmental justice groups that saw the need to phase out the industries that were harming  
28 workers, community health and the planet, while also providing just pathways for workers into new  
29 livelihoods; and

30 Whereas just-transition initiatives shift the economy from dirty energy to energy democracy,  
31 from funding new highways to expanding public transit, from incinerators and landfills to zero waste  
32 products, from industrial food systems to food sovereignty, from car-dependent sprawl and destruc-  
33 tive unbridled growth to smart urban development without displacement and from destructive over-  
34 development to habitat and ecosystem restoration; and

35 Whereas at the core of a just transition is equity, self-determination, culture, tradition, deep  
36 democracy and the belief that people around the world have a fundamental human right to clean,  
37 healthy and adequate air, water, land, food, education, health care and shelter; and

38 Whereas marginalized populations in Oregon and worldwide, including people of color, immi-  
39 grants, indigenous communities, low-income individuals, people with disabilities and the unhoused  
40 are already disproportionately affected by the effects of climate change and will continue to bear  
41 an excess burden as temperatures increase, oceans rise and disasters worsen; and

42 Whereas building a society that is resilient to the current, expected and potential effects of  
43 climate change will protect health, lives, ecosystems and economies, and such resilience efforts will  
44 have the greatest positive impact if the most dramatic potential consequences of climate change are  
45 taken into account; and

1       Whereas justice calls for climate resilience that addresses the specific experiences, vulnerabili-  
2 ties and needs of marginalized communities, which must be included and supported in actively en-  
3 gaging in climate resilience planning, policy and actions; and

4       Whereas actions to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions or draw down greenhouse gases may be  
5 taken in ways that also improve resilience to the effects of climate change, and vice versa; and

6       Whereas justice requires that frontline communities, which have historically borne the brunt of  
7 the extractive fossil fuel economy, participate actively in the planning and implementation of this  
8 mobilization effort at all levels of government and that they benefit first from the transition to a  
9 renewable energy economy; and

10       Whereas fairness demands the protection and expansion of workers' rights to organize as well  
11 as a guarantee of high-paying, high-quality jobs with comprehensive benefits for all as the  
12 mobilization to restore a safe climate is launched; and

13       Whereas common sense demands that this unprecedented mobilization effort address the full  
14 suite of existential ecological threats facing humanity in a comprehensive, integrated and timely  
15 fashion; and

16       Whereas the United States can act as a global leader by converting to an ecologically, socially  
17 and economically regenerative economy at emergency speed and by rapidly organizing a national  
18 just transition and climate emergency mobilization effort; now, therefore,

19 **Be It Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon:**

20       That we, the members of the Eightieth Legislative Assembly, respectfully urge the Congress of  
21 the United States to initiate an immediate social and economic mobilization to reverse global  
22 warming and the global economy's overshoot of ecological limits; and be it further

23       Resolved, That we urge Congress to enact legislation along the lines of the proposed Green New  
24 Deal in order to respond to the climate emergency; and be it further

25       Resolved, That a copy of this memorial shall be sent to the President of the United States, to  
26 the Senate Majority Leader, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and to each member  
27 of the Oregon Congressional Delegation.

28