

Please consider this testimony in favor of strong climate action during the 2020 short session of the Oregon Legislature.

My name is Chris O'Neill, and I am writing today in support of SB 1530. It is time for the Oregon Legislature to act forcefully to reduce greenhouse gasses—actually we are late, though hopefully not too late.

I read news articles and letters to the editor and recognize that some citizens fear the impact of “cap and trade” on their businesses, livelihoods, and families. Yes, there will be some level of economic impact that farmers and ranchers and others want to avoid, and who cannot empathize with the situation they—indeed, *all of us*—are in? However, we are already experiencing negative economic and health impacts in Oregon from hotter forest fires, leaner rainfall, and changes in the Pacific Ocean. *Everyone* is affected. And the vast and overwhelming majority of climate scientists tell us that these negative impacts will only worsen unless and until we drawdown the amount of greenhouse gases that human activity pumps into the atmosphere every moment of every day. You must act now!

With that goal in mind—drawing down the greenhouse gases that imperil our ecological systems—SB 1530 is a sensible, market-based strategy. All the major polluting industries should compete in the “carbon market,” and the licensing revenue collected from the carbon auction should fund projects that promote clean energy job growth in communities all across the state, including rural, low-income, Tribal, and communities of color.

But SB 1530 needs to be stronger to reduce pollution from natural gas and to increase investments for the clean economy. Toward that end, while the basic features of SB 1530 are sound, please make this bill even stronger, then forward “do pass” from committee.

Finally, thank you for investing the effort to understand and sort through energy solutions for a more hope-filled future. It is the most important public policy work of our lifetime.

Sincerely yours,
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