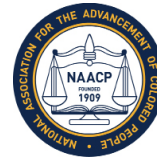
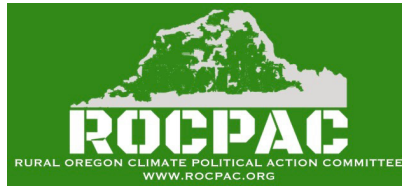


# Indigenous, Environmental Justice, and Rural Communities Call for A Strong Clean Energy Jobs Bill



**NAACP**  
Eugene ~ Springfield Branch  
[www.NAACPLanecounty.org](http://www.NAACPLanecounty.org)



Southern Oregon Climate Action Now

**SOCAN**  
Confronting Climate Change

<http://socan.eco>

**OrCAN**  
Oregon Climate & Agriculture Network



Klamath Youth Tribal Council

We are leaders and organizations representing indigenous, rural, and frontline communities in the unceded land known as Oregon. Our people are already experiencing the devastating impacts of the climate crisis, as temperatures rise and drought conditions worsen across the state.

We've worked with partners in the Renew Oregon coalition on the Clean Energy Jobs bill, to shape a policy to require the largest polluters in the state to pay for their emissions and reduce them as quickly as possible. We fought hard to ensure vulnerable communities most impacted by the climate crisis will see a majority of investments from dollars raised from polluters. HB 2020A, the version of Clean Energy Jobs that passed the Oregon House of Representatives in June 2019, recognized our efforts. But as lawmakers prepare to bring the policy back for another legislative session, we find ourselves standing on the edge of the unknown. Here, we make our voices heard on what our communities need out of a strong Clean Energy Jobs bill.

## Rapidly Reduce Pollution

Traditional and community knowledge shows us our world is distorting before our very eyes. Snowpack is disappearing. Forests are dry. Rivers are warming. The biome is in shock.

It is not enough to stop future fossil fuel projects. For the last twenty years, Oregon has increased its pollution levels every year. We need a policy that reduces our annual pollution quickly. In HB 2020A, we established a cap on pollution that would reduce our statewide greenhouse gas emissions to at least 40% under 1990 levels by 2035, and at least 80% below 1990 levels by the year 2050. In real terms, the program would prevent roughly 190 million metric tons of pollution from entering the atmosphere in the first 15 years. No single Oregon policy reduces our reliance on fossil fuels at this rate. Lawmakers must start with these targets in crafting next year's bill, and improve upon them as science demands we do.

## **Make Polluters Pay**

Globally, 100 companies are responsible for 71% of total climate pollution every year. In Oregon, about 100 companies emit 84% of total annual climate pollution. These companies enjoy massive profits without taking any responsibility when crops fail, when people get sick from bad air quality, and when people who work outdoors cannot work safely due to erratic weather. This policy addresses a basic question of responsibility.

In HB 2020A, all major oil and gas corporations were required to pay their full and fair share into the program. These multinational corporations, with annual global revenues over \$1.6 trillion, represent the most powerful industry on the planet, and the one most responsible for the climate crisis. Fossil fuel importers account for 60% of all pollution regulated by the program, so it was a significant victory to ensure not one fuel importer received free allowances or loopholes in HB 2020A. We also fought to ensure any new fossil fuel infrastructure built in Oregon must pay for every ton of pollution. We need this year's bill to do the same.

## **Invest in Vulnerable Communities**

How Oregon transitions from fossil fuel dependence to a clean energy economy matters. Historically, rural, low-income, and communities of color have been left out of opportunities for high-paying clean energy jobs. Low-income households, along with those in communities of color and rural communities, frequently experience higher energy burdens than the average household.

Our organizations fought to ensure at least 40% of the Climate Investment Fund was allocated to Oregon's most vulnerable communities so we could bring the transition to clean energy to places in the state that need it most. Projects to build affordable housing near places of work, make homes and schools more energy efficient, install community solar, improve drinking water infrastructure - all would save people money, create more energy independence, and improve health outcomes. And with the strong labor standards we achieved in HB 2020A, we would have guaranteed these projects would create high-paying jobs with benefits. Without this 40% allocation, rural and low income communities and communities of color will continue to miss out on decades of clean energy investments enjoyed by only a small part of the state.

## **Strengthen Indigenous Sovereignty**

Indigenous communities are on the front lines of the climate crisis. In Oregon, Tribes are experiencing a loss of cultural foods and precious natural resources, while being the most financially vulnerable communities in the state.

HB 2020A required 10% of the Climate Investment Fund to be directly invested by the Oregon Tribes, roughly \$20-40 million per year in the first 10 years. This would create unprecedented opportunities for greater energy sovereignty, protecting first foods habitats, and job creation for Tribal members. Tribes were well-positioned to take advantage of offset project dollars as further opportunities for land reclamation and Indigenous forest management practices, as the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs has. Additionally, Tribes' representatives were guaranteed seats on all program implementation and oversight committees. If next year's bill gives fossil fuel importers a free ride, this drastically undermines the Tribes ability to protect land and people against climate impacts.

## **Spur Rural Economic Development**

Rural Oregon has been underinvested in for decades, placing strain on the natural resources we all depend on and the communities that steward these landscapes. Our rural communities have the potential to become hubs of clean energy development and carbon sequestration, while continuing to manage Oregon's iconic forests, farms, and ranches for future generations.

HB 2020A prioritized stimulation of Oregon's rural economies by setting aside 20% of the Climate Investment Fund for projects on natural and working lands. It would provide millions of dollars each year to sequester carbon on working forests, farms, and ranches, reduce wildfire risk, maintain wildlife habitat, and improve irrigation efficiency for agricultural production. HB 2020A's investments in transportation upgrades, clean energy, and natural resource management would provide an unprecedented commitment of hundreds of millions of dollars annually in rural economic development and community well-being. Without the 20% allocation, the certainty of this future is in question.

## **We are out of time**

Forty years ago, fossil fuel companies learned of the outsized role they played in destabilizing the fabric of our existence. They chose to spend millions of dollars on disinformation and lobbying to suppressing action to prevent the climate crisis ever since. They chose short-term profits for the wealthy few over the survival of life as we know it for billions of people, for generations to come.

Today, the impacts are felt across our state. Four counties in Oregon have the worst air quality in the country due to the impacts of burning fossil fuels. Toxic algae blooms poison drinking water sources every summer. Ocean acidification threatens to wipe out our shellfish industry. Drought makes farming riskier and more expensive, and threatens our snowpack in the winter and our rivers in the summer, which support recreational and food economies and traditions.

Oregon deserves a chance to reduce our pollution while ensuring that our rural communities, communities of color, low-income families, and Tribes benefit from the transition to clean energy. We are calling on our state lawmakers to craft a Clean Energy Jobs bill that holds fossil fuel companies fully accountable for their pollution with no loopholes, and invests the majority of program dollars into communities that need it most, those impacted first and worst by the climate crisis.