

February 8, 2020

Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

Chair Dembrow, Vice Chair Olsen and Committee,

For the record my name is Lee Mercer and I reside in Silverton, Oregon, where our city council has begun a strong effort to address energy sustainability issues. My wife, Laurie Chadwick, and I, are here in support of SB 1530 to begin to do our part in Oregon to seriously address the climate change crisis.

Laurie and I returned last week from a 2-week trip to Vietnam and Cambodia, where we travelled by boat on the Mekong Delta from Ho Chi Minh City into Cambodia. Travelling in these beautiful countries we reflected on the pain they have suffered in the last half century and were impressed and inspired by the resilience of the Vietnamese and the Cambodian people.



But, with all respect to the Timber Unity folks and the inconvenience they fear from higher fuel prices, the inhabitants of the planet, and of areas like the Mekong Delta, have much more to fear from climate change.

Vietnam, largely in the Delta, is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest rice exporter and the 5<sup>th</sup> largest rice producer in the world. They are virtually the rice bowl of Asia, feeding millions of people world-wide.

But Climate change is beginning to have dramatic effects on the delta. Overflooding of Vietnam's rice fields in recent years have raised salt-water content. In 2013 farmers had entire crops destroyed sending many into poverty. In 2015 drought due to low levels of fresh water destroyed entire crop systems. Over the past 10 years 1.7 million people have emigrated out of the Mekong Delta. And its role as the rice bowl of Asia, is being threatened.



So, we as Oregonians, and good citizens of earth, need to get serious and deal boldly to address the climate change crisis, by passing bills like SB 1530, before it is literally too late for our collective survival.

Thanks for your time and consideration in this critical matter.

Lee Mercer and Laurie Chadwick, Silverton