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Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE, Room C
Salem, OR 97301

Multnomah County Supports SB 1530

Chair Dembrow and Members of the Committee:

Multnomah County urges your support of Senate Bill 1530, with the -27 amendments, a critical step forward in addressing the climate crisis that will impact every community in Oregon.

We appreciate the tremendous effort it has taken to reach this point. Over the last six years, this bill has received thoughtful consideration and an unprecedented amount of public input. The time to pass this bill is now, our communities can no longer wait for meaningful action on the climate crisis.

It has been Multnomah County's long standing position that the State must put a price on greenhouse gas pollution to meaningfully reduce emissions in line with scientifically accepted atmospheric limits on greenhouse gas concentrations. By establishing a firm cap on greenhouse gas emissions, we believe SB 1530 puts our state on the path toward meaningful emissions reductions and sets Oregon apart as a leader in the global fight against climate change. SB 1530 is a thoughtful and replicable approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and should be adopted by the Legislature with the -27 amendments, which strengthen the bill by including voices of impacted communities in decision making among other important improvements.

A broad plurality of Multnomah County's 800,000 residents strongly believe that climate change presents a clear and present danger that requires significant transitions in our economy and

society, and that the benefits from this transition will far outweigh any challenges. This is why in 2017, Multnomah County and the City of Portland jointly committed to transitioning our community to being powered entirely by renewable energy by the year 2050. We believe that moving to a clean energy economy will make us more resilient and prosperous and that the economic and public health benefits of this transformation can significantly benefit our entire community. With deliberate and authentic partnership with impacted communities, the clean energy transition presents an historic opportunity to benefit people of color, low income people, and the many others who have been left behind by previous waves of economic development. We firmly believe that the benefits and burdens of this transition must be equitably distributed so that communities on the frontlines of climate change receive the support and investment needed to ensure this is a just transition.


As elected leaders who have both served in the Oregon Legislature, we understand the tremendous challenge of finding consensus on complex issues in a state with as much rich diversity as Oregon. We understand that trade-offs are inevitable and that seldom does everyone get exactly what they want. However, that should not prevent Oregon from collectively addressing the existential threat presented by the climate crisis. Our communities and economy are suffering today and to delay action is to abdicate our responsibility. From acidifying oceans that are harming our irreplaceable fisheries, to out of control forest fires that are ravaging our forest lands, and worsening air quality impacting kids and the elderly, our people are already feeling the impacts. And for low-income and black, indigenous, and people of color households, these impacts are hitting first and worst. This is as true for households struggling in Multnomah County as it is for households struggling across the state. Climate change will exacerbate the health, economic and social disparities that currently exist throughout Oregon, and failure to act is not an option if you care about the well-being of its people.

We deeply appreciate your leadership on this issue and strongly urge your support of SB 1530.

Sincerely,



Deborah Kafoury
Multnomah County Chair



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