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CITY OF

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**PORTLAND, OREGON**

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**Ted Wheeler, Mayor**  
Amanda Fritz, Commissioner  
Jo Ann Hardesty, Commissioner  
Chloe Eudaly, Commissioner

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February 11, 2020

The Honorable Michael Dembrow, Chair  
Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Dembrow and Members of the Committee,

The earth is on fire and we have only a short time to turn the tide. The climate crisis is one of the most far-reaching environmental, economic, public health and social problems of the 21st century, especially for Oregon's Black and Indigenous communities, communities of color, and low-income populations. This crisis is urgent and demands serious action. Reducing emissions, shifting Oregon's energy supply and transportation sector away from fossil fuels, and building resilience for communities on the frontlines of climate change are paramount to tackling this crisis and creating a healthy environment.

The City of Portland is moving in the right direction with advanced building sector policies, purchasing 100 percent renewable energy for City operations, electrifying our City fleet and supporting the decarbonization of the transit system, and improving transit options for all Portlanders to reduce vehicle miles traveled. The voter-approved, community-led Portland Clean Energy Fund offers a vision for a local Green New Deal that will drive investments towards clean energy projects and job training programs, and other climate solutions that build resilience and create opportunity for frontline communities.

Cities across the globe are taking up climate action in the absence of necessary or sufficient commitments at the state and federal levels. Yet the scale and urgency of the climate crisis demands a collective response. Now is the time for Oregon to act. However, any statewide effort to cap carbon emissions cannot preempt local action. A prohibition on local climate action robs communities of their ability to curb emissions, manage right of way, fund equitable climate transitions, and otherwise innovate to address the existential crisis of our time. We cannot afford to limit the tools we have to tackle this crisis.

The state must be a full partner in addressing the climate crisis. The City of Portland seeks to collaborate with the State of Oregon to create a comprehensive policy for significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions and investing in a just and low-carbon future. To this end, the transportation sector is a fundamental component of reducing carbon emissions and improving air quality. In both Portland and Oregon, transportation accounts for approximately 40 percent of total greenhouse gas emissions. Reducing single occupancy vehicle trips, increasing transit

ridership, building safe infrastructure to encourage more active transportation, and transitioning to electric and other zero-emission vehicles throughout Oregon are central to reducing emission levels.

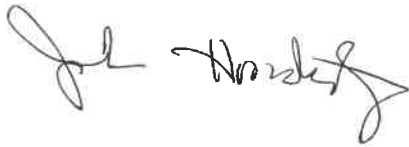
This is the time for courageous leadership. SB 1530 must go much farther to hold big polluters accountable and partner with sovereign tribal governments and frontline communities. Allowing the biggest emitters to continue business as usual is untenable—science tells us that we no longer have the luxury of ignoring any source of emissions. Polluters must be required to adapt to this new reality and pay their fair share to reverse the environmental degradation our children and grandchildren will inherit. Business as usual is not acceptable.

The City of Portland is committed to aggressive climate action and urges the state to move forward with a comprehensive, meaningful, and equitable policy for capping carbon emissions and investing in a just transition to a clean energy economy that benefits all Oregonians, especially frontline communities that are poised to be impacted the most by the climate crisis.

Sincerely,



Ted Wheeler  
Mayor



Jo Ann Hardesty  
Commissioner



Amanda Fritz  
Commissioner



Chloe Eudaly  
Commissioner