



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

February 18, 2020

Senator Kathleen Taylor and Representative Jeff Reardon, Co-Chairs
Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources
900 Court St. NE, S-423 and H-473
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chairs Taylor and Reardon, and Members of the Committee:

The Deschutes County Board of Commissioners opposes Senate Bill 1530 and asks that members of the Oregon Legislature not pass it during the 2020 session. All of us Commissioners have long supported efforts at clean water, clean air and positive energy options for our state and nation. However, we also believe that any measure this divisive should be passed only by a vote of the people of Oregon. The anticipated costs and debated benefits are both too significant.

Senate Bill 1530 mandates a "climate change" policy that will raise prices for transportation fuels, natural gas and propane. These costs will force financial hardship on our region's small business owners, rural citizens, local manufacturers, farmers and trucking companies. We worry that Central Oregon will suffer and see jobs lost as local businesses close and move out of state. Creating this competitive disadvantage, especially in our state's rural and non-metro areas, doesn't make sense.

We also have concerns about the impact Senate Bill 1530 will have on gas taxes for day to day living. Adding an additional 22 cents to each gallon of gas (which would grow to \$3.00 per gallon) -- on top of the 36 cents Oregonians pay now -- will create unnecessary hardship for many, including young families, fixed-income seniors, and so many other County residents who are already struggling with our region's high cost of living. It is more difficult to calculate the impacts from increases planned to natural gas and propane sources. We also worry that recently introduced amendments that would affect Bend but exempt other areas of Deschutes County from certain regulations will cause undue confusion and serious economic distortions.

Senate Bill 1530 will impact the cost of doing business for our County and counties and cities around the state. For instance we estimate a financial impact of more than \$109,317 on our County fleet, in annual costs due to impacts from the increasing cost of fuel. More significantly, the bill will tax non-County auto and truck traffic in our County between \$10 to \$11 million annually.

We strongly encourage you to oppose Senate Bill 1530. We think all Oregonians can agree that a policy that puts Oregon's businesses on an un-level playing field with their out-of-state competitors elsewhere is simply not good policy.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact any of the Commissioners listed below or Laura Skundrick, Deschutes County Administrative Analyst by phone at 541-330-4627 or by email at Laura.Skundrick@deschutes.org.

Sincerely,

DESCHUTES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS


Patti Adair, Chair


Anthony DeBone, Vice Chair


Philip G. Henderson, Commissioner

c: Members of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
Senators Lynn Findley, Tim Knopp, and Dennis Linthicum
Representatives Daniel Bonham, Cheri Helt, Vikki Breese Iverson, and Jack Zika