

It's incredibly frightening to be seventeen years old and to see my home burn around me. Climate change is here and the destruction of our planet is only getting worse. Here in Oregon, fires and storms are wrecking homes. People are dying in heat waves and farmers are losing their crops— their income— because of drought.

I know that in the next ten years, our systems must drastically change to lessen the effects of the climate crisis and protect communities across the globe- including in the Pacific Northwest.

\$7.5 billion is A LOT of money. \$7,500,000,000! (Yes, there are eight zeroes.) Imagine what we could do to help people in our state with \$7,500,000,000! Imagine how many people we could house, how many meals we could provide, how many lives we could save...

I'm concerned— scared, actually— that spending up to \$7.5 billion on one infrastructure project will prevent us from funding a clean transition to a fossil fuel free region.

If we spend \$7,500,000,000 on this "bridge replacement", how will we fund bike paths along dangerous highways? How will we increase car-share programs and charging stations for more electric cars? How will we fund buses that *actually run on weekends* in rural communities like my own?

\$7.5 is a lot of money. I'm sure that if we spend it on this project, it will impact our future financial situation. As a young person, who will have to deal with the impact of this expenditure now, I ask you to make decisions with reason and logic. We can do so much more for our region with \$7,500,000,000. Let's do it.

—Ukiah Halloran-Steiner, 17, Yamhill County, OR