

Dear Co-Chairs Johnson, Steiner Hayward and Rayfield, and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is Connie Peterson and except for forays to other States for college and employment, I have been an Oregonian for 70 years, I lived in Bend when it was a town of 12,000 people and was grateful to be able to return to live here in 2012. I care deeply about this planet, my State and community so as you consider how to balance the state budget and use federal funding from the American Rescue Plan Act, I urge you to continue to invest in Oregon by ensuring an equitable economic recovery for all in ways that honor the specialness and beauty of Oregon and the rich diversity of the people who reside here.

These past years, and especially 2020 have demonstrated the needs to prioritize full funding for our state natural resource, environmental, and health agencies to support family-wage green jobs, protect public health, and reduce harmful climate pollution. Returning to normal is not sufficient, because "normal" threatens our environment and was not working for too many! I urge you to seize the opportunity to rebuild a better, healthier, more resilient Oregon for all, by supporting funding opportunities that promote equitable job growth and health outcomes, lift up workers and frontline communities, and help mitigate climate impacts by supporting a transition to a clean energy economy.

As you shape the legislative budget for the 2021 - 2023 biennium, please fully fund agencies working to meet our state's climate and equity goals. By providing funding for programs that reduce emissions, invest in clean energy jobs, and promote climate-friendly infrastructure, you will support an equitable and stable economic recovery that improves public health outcomes and benefits families and working people.

Even though I wish these goals could have been met through the legislative process, I support full funding for all the program areas for the Governor's Climate Executive Order, also known as the Oregon Climate Action Plan (OCAP) Please support transportation electrification and equitable, climate-smart transportation planning at the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) and Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). We have a chance to continue, and improve on, our often visionary legacy of resource protection. Before it is too late, please implement greenhouse gas reduction programs currently underway at the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), including the Climate Protection Program and the Statewide Transportation Strategy. Invest in environmental justice land use planning that ensures state climate work advances equity-driven solutions. To ensure all voices are valued, please include those who have been traditionally marginalized, Promote equitable outcomes and environmental justice by funding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion staff in a number of natural resource agencies. We can and must promote climate mitigation policies that concurrently provide public health co-benefits.

Thank you for your service, and for acting on the moral imperative we leave our State better for our children and grandchildren.  
Connie Peterson