

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

For the record, my name is Holly Cook and I live in Portland. As you consider how to balance the state budget and use federal funding from the American Rescue Plan Act, I urge you to move Oregon forward by ensuring an equitable economic recovery for all.

Specifically, please 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.

We cannot afford to return to “normal”—normal wasn’t working. 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, I ask that you 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.

That includes funding to:

Fully fund all the program areas for the Governor’s Climate Executive Order, also known as the Oregon Climate Action Plan (OCAP)
Support transportation electrification and equitable, climate-smart transportation planning at the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) and Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT).

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 justice work advances equity-driven solutions.

Promote climate mitigation policies that provide public health co-benefits.

Commit to equitable outcomes and environmental justice by funding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion staff in a number of natural resource agencies.

Thank you for your consideration,

Holly Cook