

To the Chief Sponsors Senator Dembrow and Golden and Representatives Marsh and Neron and members of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources:

I am writing in support of SB 530 regarding Natural Climate Solutions. As a physician concerned about public health and the grave threat posed by worsening climate crises and as a grandparent worried about the future we have made for our descendants, I urge voting this bill into law.

I have watched the evolution of science on the climate since the 1980s. Any hopes of keeping warming to less than 1.5 degrees centigrade are waning rapidly. Levels of methane are rising dangerously. The globe has not even seen a peak in greenhouse gas emissions, let alone the rapid decrease we need if we hope for our grandchildren to have a livable environment.

Even aggressive reduction of GHG emissions will not be enough. We need to use all tools available. One of the most powerful tools we can employ in Oregon is to maximize carbon sequestration in our forests, prairies, wetlands and pastures. SB 530 lays out a roadmap for doing this important work.

This bill will promote healthier forests, soils and wetlands. This will strengthen rural communities many of which are in dire need of support. Having worked in rural areas for most of my career, I know how much such support can mean to maintain and enhance the lives of families in these places.

The bill will direct state agencies to create an inventory of land that can foster carbon capture. It will provide much-needed technical assistance to rural areas. It will facilitate Oregon getting unprecedented large infusions of federal money to support these activities.

Moving ahead with SB 530 will be transformative for our state, bolstering our rural communities and solidifying our role as a leading state for climate solutions. We need this legislation passed!

Sincerely,

Joseph Stenger MD  
Member of the Metro Climate Action Team