

Submitter: Chloe Gilmore

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Measure: HB2396

To: Committee: Climate, Energy, and Environment

From: Chloe Gilmore

Date: February 15th, 2023

Re: HB2396

Good afternoon members of the Climate, Energy, and Environment Committee, my name is Chloe Gilmore. Thank you for this opportunity to submit my written testimony. I am a member of Lincoln High School's Environmental Justice class and Portland Climate Strike who is passionate about enacting change on the legislative level. I am giving this testimony in collaboration with Neighbors for Clean Air in support of the bill which requires Oregon to enact regulations on high concentrations of pollutants, especially diesel, emitted from indirect sources.

I often hear those around me praising Oregon for its clean air, trees, nature, and green policies which is why I believed it. Just two weeks ago, I was not aware of the current public health crisis that Oregon is experiencing with diesel pollution. Neighbors for Clean Air came to my class and informed me of statistics that left me shocked. I learned that Multnomah County is ranked in the worst 2% for diesel pollution in the nation, causing not only asthma but a multitude of health risks like cancer and cardiac disease. I thought Oregon's policies like the Clean Air Act had protected us from such high levels of pollution; it was disturbing to discover that there is no legislation that protects its citizens from many deadly pollutants.

Going to Lincoln High School in Portland, I was aware that there was some risk of health issues from pollution from cars in the city. However, I never thought twice about the large construction site that I walked by everyday and was just a couple hundred feet away from the building of the school I attended. I just recently became aware that 75% of diesel pollution in Oregon is emitted from indirect sources of pollution like construction vehicles which are currently unregulated. This is especially frightening with the understanding that children are more severely impacted by this issue and are at a higher risk of disease when exposed to diesel pollution. Thinking back on my years of elementary and middle school, I remember frequently being in close proximity to active construction sites or other sources of diesel. This whole time I had been uninformed of the risk posed by simply attending school.

Even as someone who has lived in close proximity to construction sites, I am not most severely affected by this issue as a white person living in a wealthy neighborhood surrounded by green spaces and with access to healthcare. It's

important to acknowledge how poor people are on the frontlines of this crisis along with Black, Brown, and Indigenous people who are 2-3x more likely to be exposed to high levels of diesel pollutants in Oregon due to factors like redlining, racist policies, and disinvestment.

Clear air is a human right. People have the right to live in a world where they are not predisposed to illness. It feels as if our state government is silently ignoring diesel pollution while it continues to plague our schools, homes, cities, and workplaces. All people who have been impacted by this public health crisis deserve justice.

This bill is a step towards not only combatting the climate crisis, but also making sure that all residents of Oregon can grow up and live in a world free of toxic air. I urge you to please listen to student voices and the voices of community members who are dealing with the impacts of our dangerous levels of unregulated pollutants. I ask you to consider my testimony and vote YES on HB2396, a lifesaving bill.