

Submitter: Mark Keller

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB530

Testimony on SB 530 to Senate Committee on Natural Resources, 2/15/23 Chair Golden and members of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources, We are Mark and Pam Keller and our home is between Lebanon and Sweet Home. We write today in support of Senate Bill 530. Between us we have over 40 years in soil science careers. Since retirement we have been caretaking our 19 acres of woods, pasture, and riparian lands.

Senate Bill 530 takes the important step of including land management in policy to encourage and enhance carbon sequestration. Land management practices sequester less than direct emission capture, but for far less cost. It is the “easy pickings” of climate mitigation.

We support the establishment of dedicated funds in Oregon departments which have land management responsibilities. We support the Bill’s intent for cross-agency coordination on natural climate solutions and oversight by the Oregon Global Warming Commission.

The matters of determining carbon baseline and activity-based metrics are problematic and we urge that appropriate expertise (soil scientists!) be adequately involved.

Incentives and technical assistance for landowners, identified in the Bill, are necessary. We recall a Dept. of Forestry program, decades ago, that offered woodland owners free fuels management around homes. It was great for us, great for the forest, and great for the youth given a summer job. Doing the work needed to improve our woodland and riparian zone is too much for us without assistance. One of the best aspects of SB 530 is the whole landscape approach. This is so important if we are serious about tackling climate problems. In Oregon we have a uniquely valuable carbon storage landscape. There are only a handful of critical “irrecoverable carbon” areas globally. These are places where, if the carbon is released, it cannot be put back. Places like the Amazon and the Congo. One of these few is the Pacific NW coastal forests, because of the big trees. Other areas where the whole landscape approach is critical is invasives control and watershed management.

Federal, State, and private all need to work together. The Inflation Reduction Act is an opportunity and passage of SB 530 is a path to make it happen.

Thank you,

Mark and Pam Keller

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