

To: Senate Committee on Energy and Environment

Re: SB 803

3/9/23

Greetings Chair Sollman, Vice-Chair Findley, and Members of the Committee:

Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility respectfully submits this testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 803.

Guided by the values and expertise of medicine and public health, Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) works to protect human life from the gravest threats to health and survival. We are an organization of over 2,800 health professionals and public health advocates statewide working collaboratively with community partners to educate and advocate for societal and policy change that protects human health at the local, state, national, and international level. We seek a healthy, just, and peaceful world for present and future generations.

SB 803 is about our response as a state to the global climate emergency — and as such, it fails miserably:

It delays taking action statewide until 2030 — too late to avert the worst impacts of climate disruption as indicated by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in its 2022 report. We know well that we have little time to act to make necessary changes and this bill would encourage long term use of diesel fuel, fatally delaying an effective response. The bill has 2 large loopholes that will further reduce the effectiveness of the renewable fuel standard: enforcement is suspended if the supply of fuel meeting the renewable fuel standard is insufficient and if the price of renewable fuel goes above the price of fossil diesel, both of which seem likely due to market conditions.

The bill fails to consider that the production of non-conventional diesel has major adverse impacts on the environment and human health and also on the climate. The entire life cycle for the production and use of this fuel must be considered for its adverse effects locally, statewide, and globally.

The dependence on crops to produce fuel rather than food sets up a competition for acreage and resources such as land and water, when droughts and climate

Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility

The US affiliate of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, Recipient of the 1985 Nobel Peace Prize

4110 SE Hawthorne Blvd. #758 Portland, OR

97214 Tel: 503-274-2720 info@oregonpsr.org www.oregonpsr.org



OREGON PSR

PHYSICIANS FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

disruption have already caused crop failures and adversely affected world food supplies, adding to drastic shortages. So-called renewable diesel is not clean as it depends on continued extraction and use of fossil fuels to transport feedstock, raw materials, and product, and to produce the diesel fuel itself, with significant emissions of air pollutants and greenhouse gases. Producing fuel such as this would only add to, and not reduce, adverse health impacts of climate disruption.

As you well know, we are now, and will increasingly be experiencing the health problems associated with climate disruption if we do not respond quickly. We feel it is necessary to reiterate what those health effects are: Climate change caused disruptions of physical, biological, and ecological systems result in increased respiratory and cardiovascular disease, injuries and premature deaths related to extreme weather events, changes in the prevalence and geographical distribution of food- and water-borne illnesses and other infectious diseases, reproductive and developmental disorders, threats to mental health, and famine and malnutrition due to unstable food supplies.

SB 803 would promote the long-term use of unsustainable plant based diesel fuel and as a result, promote the construction and operation of refinery facilities that use large amounts of fossil gas to produce non-conventional diesel fuel, such as the proposed NEXT refinery near Clatskanie, and emit significant and harmful amounts of greenhouse gases and toxic and hazardous air pollutants. The proposed NEXT refinery would use significant amounts of fracked gas, electricity, and water, and emit over 1 million tons of greenhouse gas each year! How is this an appropriate response to an emergency caused by emissions of greenhouse gases?

Furthermore, the siting of a non-conventional diesel refinery has serious adverse impacts on local communities' health, infrastructure, ecosystems, and air, land, and water resources. The refineries would be vulnerable to floods, seismic activity, soil liquifaction, spills, fires and explosions, increased rainfall and storm intensity, sea level rise and storm surge, and would be at risk of becoming an abandoned asset.

The air pollutants emitted would be exacerbated by and exacerbate climate disruption. The health impacts of exposure to the air pollutants associated with the production of non-conventional diesel include acute and chronic heart, lung, and vascular diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), hypertension; cancer, and developmental and reproductive disorders.

Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility

The US affiliate of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, Recipient of the 1985 Nobel Peace Prize

4110 SE Hawthorne Blvd. #758 Portland, OR

97214 Tel: 503-274-2720 info@oregonpsr.org www.oregonpsr.org



OREGON PSR

PHYSICIANS FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Thus, SB 803 is not an adequate response to the climate emergency and would divert scarce resources from known and effective truly renewable and clean energy sources. SB 803 will not help us address the climate emergency and should be rejected.

Thank you for your attention to our concerns,

David De La Torre
Healthy Climate Program Director

Theodora Tsongas, PhD, MS
Healthy Climate Action Team

