

**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Energy and Environment  
re: SB 1559**

**February 13, 2024**

**Nora Apter, Senior Program Director, Climate  
Oregon Environmental Council**

Founded in 1968, the Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization. We advance innovative, collaborative and equitable solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges for today and future generations.

**Re: Oregon Environmental Council support for SB 1559**

Chair Sollman and members of the committee,

We are pleased to offer enthusiastic support for SB 1559, which will support continued climate progress in Oregon by modernizing our long-outdated state greenhouse gas reduction goals

The science is clear: without further, immediate government action to immediately reduce emissions across all sectors, global temperatures are likely to hit and surpass a dangerous threshold—1.5 degrees celsius of warming—within the next decade. Yet, despite broad scientific consensus urging immediate climate emissions reductions—and devastating climate impacts affecting the lives and livelihoods of Oregonians across the state—**Oregon has not updated its climate goals in 17 years.**

SB 1559 will fix that by aligning our state greenhouse gas reduction targets to reflect the best available science consistent with limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees celsius. Specifically, SB 1559 will update Oregon's climate goals, targeting emissions reductions of at least 45% below 1990 levels by 2030, at least 70% by 2040, and at least 95% by 2050. Recognizing Oregon's ability to sequester carbon through its forests, fields, marshes, and other natural resources, the bill adds language establishing an aspiration of the state to achieve net-zero by 2050 and net-zero-minus thereafter.

The state has had climate goals in statute and has had it as a policy of the state to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions since 2007. To be clear, these greenhouse gas reduction targets have never been mandatory, as the statute does not provide new or additional directives or authority to meet the state GHG goals. SB 1559 will not affect that, and explicitly maintains that language in statute.

These updated state targets will better align us with neighboring West Coast jurisdictions and President Biden's nationally determined contribution (NDC) commitment to cut U.S. emissions in half by 2030. Near-term emissions reductions will also provide public health and economic co-benefits, by improving air quality and health outcomes, and by positioning Oregon to be a leader in producing clean energy technologies that the entire world is seeking in the clean energy transition.

For these reasons, we strongly urge your support for SB 1559.

Sincerely,



Nora Apter  
Senior Program Director, Climate  
**Oregon Environmental Council**