

Submitter: Elisabeth Genly
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB681

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of SB 681.

As a retired nurse-midwife and OHSU educator, I am now a PERS recipient. In my decades of work, I helped many hundreds of newborn Oregonians into the world. I joined their parents in hoping that they were entering a healthy world that kept them safe, and helped them thrive.

A healthy climate – a climate free from deadly heat waves, free from drought, free from floods, free from polar vortex freezes – is necessary for healthy crops, forests, salmon, tourism, water supplies, ice caps and so much more. How can our children stay healthy and safe when our climate is sick and getting sicker?

In a Treasury-centric way of saying this: a healthy climate is necessary for Oregon's economic health.

As someone with a personal stake in the welfare of Oregon's children, why should our Treasury be allowed to invest in fossil fuel industries when the rest of Oregon's government has made a commitment to a fossil-free future? Why should the Treasury be allowed to play short-term fossil fuel games with Oregon's economic health? My belief is that they should not. SB 681 is a necessary step in bringing the Treasury in alignment with Oregon values.

As someone who depends on the continued strength of PERS in order to pay my monthly bills this issue and SB 681 are of personal importance to me. Why should our leaders take unnecessary risks with the current and future income of the 400,000 Oregonians who depend on the payments from PERS? My belief is that we should not.

With the future of oil now on a collision course with the future of our planet, it is not the time to assist or invest in fossil fuel industries. On the contrary we should be investing in green energy, especially since solar is now the world's cheapest source of energy and renewable capacity is growing at an incredible speed. Solar's place in Oregon's energy profile reflects our state's support of renewables...not of carbon-based energy.

The Pause Act calls for no NEW investments in the fossil fuel industry for only 5 years and there are plenty of alternative investments that are safe and secure.

Please vote the Pause Act out of committee. Thank you for your support of SB 681.

Sincerely,
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