

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

Dear Chair Meek, Vice-Chair McLane, and Members of the Committee,

My parents are biologists by training, and I grew up going with them often to visit the tide pools along the coast near my home. When I was a child, these were brimming with life: full of sea stars, urchins, and anemones, sculpins, nudibranchs, and sea cucumbers, crabs, octopuses, and sunflower stars.

Today, these tide pools are empty, other than perhaps a couple lonely sea anemones still clinging to the rocks. I challenge you to see for yourself: go to the shore, and look at how barren and lifeless our bountiful sea has become. These tide pools, once each a tiny little Eden of its own, are dead. We killed them, and we are rapidly killing everything else.

You may remember the heat dome in 2021 that smashed all of Oregon's heat records, with Salem hitting 116°. That day, I climbed Mount Bolivar in the Coast Range, and my car thermometer said it was 121°. That day, many Oregonians died from the heat.

But humans were not all that died. Scientists estimate that during that heat wave, more than a billion sea creatures died in their tide pools, cooked alive:
<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/pacific-northwest-heat-wave-killed-more-than-1-billion-sea-creatures/>

That heat wave marked a turning point; it was after then that the last vestiges of movement in the tide pools disappeared. And there is a scientific consensus that heat waves like this will continue to happen, and will only worsen, so long as we continue to recklessly consume fossil fuels.

So please-- I beg you-- do what it takes to reduce our investment in fossil fuels. What remains of sea life along the coast depends on it, as do all of us who depend on the sea for life, sustenance, livelihood, and happiness.

Sincerely,
William Crombie