

March 21st, 2025

TO: Joint Ways & Means Committee  
FROM: Britney VanCitters  
SUBJECT: Neutral HB 5006

Dear Co-Chairs Lieber and Sanchez, Co-Vice Chairs Girod, Gomberg, and Smith;  
and members of the committee,

My name is Britney VanCitters and I live in the Lents neighborhood of SE Portland. **I am testifying today to urge you to prioritize protecting and investing in Oregon's climate progress and guarding against federal chaos.** Over the past decade, we've made significant strides as a state to tackle the growing climate crisis that has devastated the health, safety, and local economies of communities across Oregon. With your leadership, we've passed legislation that helps Oregon families to access more affordable, cleaner energy sources, better prepare for and respond to extreme weather, and breathe cleaner, safer air. But we still have work to do, and these programs need your continued support or we risk an enormous backslide. That's why I'm calling on you today to support continued funding for existing, popular state programs to cut climate pollution, drive clean economic growth, and promote community resilience.

We're facing great chaos and uncertainty at the federal level, including attacks on clean air and water, affordable energy, and the integrity of our public lands. If we fail to act and protect our climate progress, it's our frontline communities — people with disabilities, rural families, people of color, and working folks — who will be hurt first and worst. But every Oregonian will feel the impact.

Investing in climate resiliency means investing in community resiliency. We all deserve to breathe clean air, drink safe water, and heat and cool our homes without facing outrageous utility bills. That's why I'm calling on you today to:

- Ensure Oregonians can heat and cool their homes affordably – without having to choose between keeping the lights on or putting food on the table. Outrageous utility bills are hurting too many families, especially in this time of economic uncertainty. You can do this by supporting:
  - **SB 5518 - \$30 million for Rental Home Heat Pump and \$15 million for Community Heat Pump Deployment Programs.** For many families, a heat pump can be a lifeline. Heat pumps mean lower utility bills when costs are skyrocketing, safety from deadly heat, and

being able to afford and stay in housing. These programs help keep people safe, housed, and secure in their communities.

- **One Stop Shop 2.0 (HB 3081)**: Oregonians need more support navigating all the programs to upgrade their homes and buildings through incentives and rebates for efficient heat pumps, improved insulation, sturdier doors and windows, and clean electric cooking. One Stop Shop 2.0 will help families get direct assistance from someone in their area to make their home projects more affordable.
- Ensure our communities are prepared for extreme weather events. Heat domes, wildfires, ice storms, drought, and extreme weather are growing more common and more devastating – and taking a serious toll on our health, safety, and economy. You can protect our communities by supporting:
  - **Community Resilience Hubs (ODHS) - \$10 million** for community resilience hubs and networks across the state to coordinate and provide access to resources and services for vulnerable populations during disasters.
- Maintain adequate funding to ensure agencies are adequately resourced to effectively implement existing climate programs and policies, including our Climate Protection Program and 100% Clean Energy law.

In any budget, I urge you to please refrain from making pre-emptive cuts based on speculation on what might happen in DC, which would simply be a signal to Elon Musk that you are willing to help cover the cost of billionaire tax breaks by sacrificing some of the most critical basic services Oregonians all rely on. Please reject any new Oregon tax breaks for corporations or the ultra-wealthy. I urge you to prepare for any coming economic downturn or federal funding reductions by doing what we know works to keep families stable: strategically investing in our communities and giving Oregonians more opportunities to thrive.

Please prioritize a state budget that protects our climate and our communities rather than adding to the chaos.

Thank you,  
Britney VanCitters  
SE Portland, 97266