



Joint Committee On Ways and Means | Salem 04/16/2025 5:00 PM Roadshow

Dear Co-Chairs, Lieber and Sanchez, and members of the Committee,

My name is Kathaleen Parker and I am combining three verbal Testimonies today on behalf of 'Rogue Climate of Oregon'.

- Heat Pumps (SB5518)
- Eelgrass (HB3580-A)
- Farmworker Disaster Relief (HB3193-A)

I am testifying today to urge you to prioritize protecting our climate progress and to continue investing in our climate resilience.

ODOE Budget SB5518 (heat pump programs)

I support funding allocated to the Rental Home Heat Pump Program and the Community Heat Pump Deployment Program in the ODOE Budget.

As a senior homeowner in Salem, I invested in a Heat pump HVAC unit in 2021. It has helped make my modest retired income stretch across my monthly utility bills for my winter heating and summer cooling.

I found out that the key to consumer satisfaction with this newer technology is proper installation of a unit that will efficiently and effectively meet heating and cooling needs to my specific size of a house

Heat pumps are more energy-efficient than traditional heating systems, reducing overall energy strain on Oregon's power grids, and can contribute to a more stable energy consumption profile.

Heat pumps produce more energy than it uses. Heat pump systems are designed to extract a greater amount of heat energy from the surrounding environment than the energy they consume to create heat. They can produce two to three times more heat output than they consume in electricity input.

Heat pumps will be the dominant heating technology in the future energy system.

Heat pumps can efficiently and reliably provide heat and cold to new and old buildings, into modernized buildings, along with single and multi-family homes, plus non-residential buildings and even an entire urban quarter (typically a mix of residential, commercial, recreational, and public spaces).

Please allocate additional funds to the Rental Home Heat Pump Program and the Community Heat Pump Deployment Program.

A heat pump program is an example of an efficient government program that can serve the public good in the short and long term.

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ODOE Budget HB3580-A (relating to eelgrass conservation)

I would like to see funding allocated to HB3580-A regarding to its relevance to Oregon’s Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water in the ODOE Budget. Eelgrass is a marine plant (seagrass) that forms large meadows in shallow waters. It is native to Oregon and eelgrass provides nurseries for juvenile fish, supports migratory birds, and can sequester carbon faster than many terrestrial habitats.

The bill's focus on protecting and enhancing eelgrass resources directly relates to the committee's jurisdiction.

Oregon Ocean Alliance (OOA) presented good points as to why we need to develop a meaningful strategy for conservation of eelgrass because our eelgrass is not thriving:

- Degradation: From pollution, dredging, sedimentation, fertilizer runoff, and some aquaculture practices.
- Significant loss: Oregon has lost 24% of estuary habitat since 1870, with severe declines of eelgrass in Coos Bay and Yaquina Bay in recent years.
- Lack of monitoring: Limited data on eelgrass means we don’t know how much habitat we have lost in Oregon

This bill aims to establish a task force to protect, conserve, and enhance eelgrass resources in Oregon.

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ODOE Budget HB 3193-A (Farmworker Disaster Relief Bill)

I would like to see funding allocated to HB3193-A which requires the Oregon Health Authority to establish and implement a permanent farmworker disaster relief program, and appropriate moneys out of the General Fund to the authority to carry out the program.

I feel HB3193-A invests in our agricultural workers because farm work involves high risks of heat-related illness, exposure to pesticides, and musculoskeletal injuries. By making this fund permanent, we can protect Oregon’s workers who face the most risks from climate change. This bill is crucial for ensuring the safety, rights, and well-being of those who feed us daily. Together, we can make a difference and show that Oregon stands up for the safety and dignity of its farmworkers.

We’re facing great chaos and uncertainty this year at the federal level, including attacks on clean air and water, affordable energy, and the integrity and stewardship of our public lands.

Thank You for your time and consideration.

Rogue Climate | @rogueclimate

Phone: 541.301.9204

Mailing Address: PO Box 1980, Phoenix, OR 97535