

**Support for Oregon Clean Fuels Program
February 24, 2015**

House Committee on Energy and Environment

Dear Chair Vega Pederson and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in support of the Oregon Clean Fuels Program and SB 324. I'm sorry I can't be there in person to testify.

I am an epidemiologist specializing in environmental and occupational diseases and in emergency preparedness and response. For 28 years I worked for the Oregon Public Health Division, Oregon Health Authority. I currently am a consultant to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Disaster Epidemiology.

I strongly support the Oregon Clean Fuels program, and I urge you to move forward to reduce the carbon pollution from the fuels sector. Adopting and implementing the full Clean Fuels Program is both a public health priority and a priority to slow climate change and help reduce the impacts to our environment and the health of all species.

In Oregon, gasoline and diesel emissions are major contributors both to local air pollution and to carbon loading that contributes to climate change. The impacts from these emissions have an immediate impact on the health of some Oregonians and they pose a long-term threat to the health of our planet and all its inhabitants.

In terms of immediate impacts, gasoline and diesel emissions are the most significant triggers of asthma for adults and children that they cannot control themselves. The prevalence of asthma, a long-term lung disease that results in repeated episodes of breathing problems, is higher in Oregon than the average across the country. Studies in major cities around the country and here in Portland indicate that the risk of asthma is higher for adults and children living near major freeways. This has been confirmed along the I-5 corridor through North Portland, along the I-84 Banfield Freeway and along parts of I-205. This is an ongoing threat throughout the year. Implementing the Clean Fuels Program will help address this public health priority.

Regarding the longer-term impacts of gasoline and diesel fuels: these are the major sources of green-house-gases (GHG) emissions in Oregon that are contributing to climate change. Implementing the Clean Fuels Program is an important step in helping this state reduce the threat of climate change.

This is important in my work, since the manifestations of climate change result in an increase of the frequency and severity of natural disasters that are affecting our

regional already. The weather chaos resulting from climate change is contributing to a wide range of disasters here in the Pacific Northwest and along the entire west coast. Chief among these are reduced snow pack that is threatening Oregon agriculture, fish species and it is contributing to the extended drought that parts of our state has been experiencing. It is also a factor in the increased risk of wildfires, heat waves, temperature inversions, winter storms, and vector borne diseases. All of these disasters affect our environment and our health. I work with public health departments all across the country to help them prepare for and respond to the threats of these kinds of disasters. And the situation is only getting worse each year.

While Oregon may not be a major player contributing to climate change on a worldwide scale, it is nevertheless incumbent upon all of us to everything we can to help reduce the damage that we are causing. Since gasoline and diesel fuel emissions are our major source of air pollution and GHGs that threaten our health and that of the planet, we must implement the Clean Fuel Program to reduce the damage we are causing. This is not the only step we must take to slow climate change, but it is the step that is before us right now.

So I urge you to please implement the full Clean Fuels Program for all of us.

Thank you.

Michael Heumann, MPH, MA
HeumannHealth Consulting, LLC
2402 NE 26th Ave.
Portland, OR 97212