

Chairs Dembrow and Helms, and members of the committee:

I would like to submit my testimony in support of SB557, the Clean Energy and Jobs bill.

I will address three questions:

- Why Oregon?
- Why this year?
- Why do the people in this room have to take responsibility?

### **Why Oregon?**

It is acknowledged that the carbon contribution of Oregon to global warming is a small percentage of the world's CO2 emissions. It has been rightly asked, why should our small state take the trouble to set in place a system to gradually decrease climate pollution and move us to renewable energy? One answer is that Oregonians are leaders. I like to think that we are able, better than most, to move out of our partisan corners, and work together for the common good. In this way we can set an example for other states. Secondly, Oregonians are collaborative: by joining forces with other jurisdictions which have or soon will have similar systems, we can link arms and amplify the benefits to all, far beyond our own borders. Thirdly, Oregonians are practical. This bill will directly benefit Oregon's economy: renewable energy jobs are good jobs, often available to those with high school educations who live in rural parts of our states. (1). It is about time that we realize that the renewable transition is a win/win economically for our entire state.

### **Why this year?**

Oregon legislators have a full plate this session, what with a difficult budget and other pressing issues. Yet I believe we have a moment of opportunity that should not be passed by. On the one hand, we have an ever-growing consensus, even in the coal industry (2) and among top Republican leaders (3), that climate change is real, manmade, and that there are steps we can take to minimize it. We could wait even longer, until the last member of the legislature admits that the droughts, fires, and floods, that we have been seeing are worsened by global warming. But the longer we wait the less opportunity we have to use prevention rather than adaptation as a response to climate pollution. As a physician, I have always recommended preventive measures, which work better, and at lower cost, than treatment once you have the disease. And remember: this bill is not a budget-buster – it will generate revenues that can be used to help those of us who have not benefitted from our growing economy.

### **Why do the people in this room have to take responsibility?**

I am an obstetrician, and I have delivered thousands of babies. Today in Oregon, about 123 babies will be born, and they will have an average life expectancy of

about 80 years. I am thinking about these 123 newborn children, these newly minted Oregonians. They have no say yet in the world of tomorrow. But they will be the ones who will reap the harvest of our decisions today. When they are our age, or perhaps near the end of their lives in the year 2100, what will they say about us? – about those who had the power to make their world a livable one – or not. We have been incredibly lucky to live in this state, in this country, in this time in history. Will we say to those infants tough luck: we had a good life, and too bad for those who come later, or will we make the small changes necessary to give those with a birthday of March 1, 2017 the best chance of lives at least as good as ours?

Thank you for allowing me to testify. I would be happy to answer any questions.

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1. [http://www.oregon.gov/boli/ATD/docs/Opening\\_Announcements/1126\\_20170101\\_1130\\_LRT.pdf](http://www.oregon.gov/boli/ATD/docs/Opening_Announcements/1126_20170101_1130_LRT.pdf)

2. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/26/business/energy-environment/coal-industry-clean-energy.html>

3. <http://www.dallasnews.com/opinion/editorials/2017/02/23/conservative-groups-carbon-plan-gives-us-hope-climate-change-action>