

Smith Holly

From: HEE Exhibits
Subject: RE: SB 557 Written Testimony - SUPPORT

From: Evan Pierce [<mailto:pierce.evan@gmail.com>]
Sent: Thursday, March 2, 2017 1:05 PM
To: Sen.MichaelDembrow@state.or.us; rep.kenhelm@state.or.us; Sen Prozanski
<Sen.FloydProzanski@oregonlegislature.gov>
Subject: SB 557 Written Testimony - SUPPORT

Apologies for not emailing this in time for the official written testimony (I'm new to engaging with Oregon legislation / OLIS, and was under the impression there was more time). I stayed through the whole hearing yesterday, though I didn't get a chance to give in-person testimony, and I very much appreciate the time that you and the committee have given.

To: Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
Chair Senator Michael Dembrow
Chair Representative Ken Helm
RE: SB 557 – Clean Energy Jobs Bill - SUPPORT

With a \$1.7 billion budget deficit in Oregon, we have no choice but to be hard-nosed about our state budget. We can't spend money we don't have, and we can't afford to pass up on revenue-neutral opportunities to encourage our growth industries -- especially the growth industries which will come to define the future of Oregon's economy.

Along the Columbia and Highway 84, fields of wind farms dot the horizon. And if you talk to folks around there, you wouldn't know we just got out of the biggest recession in almost 100 years. The way renewable energy transformed that district from one of the poorest in Oregon to one of the richest has experts talking about a great untapped boom throughout rural Oregon, a billion dollar industry in the future of energy.

Meanwhile, in Hood River, Oregon's existing billion dollar outdoor recreation industry was decimated by the smoke and ash from nearby forest fires. Wildfire aren't new of course, but recent years have seen them spreading twice as large as they had just decades ago, and every year is setting new temperature records, drying out our forests, leaving them as tinderboxes, ripe for ever-larger forest fires. We're no longer talking about 50 or 100 years down the line. Climate change is decimating our industries today. In recent years, it's cost Oregon consistently upwards of \$88 million a year to contain the increasing wildfires. In 50-100 years unchecked, it's just catastrophic. By 2100, within the lifetimes of some who are around today, we're on track to see as many 100+ degree days in Oregon as currently occur in Texas, to say nothing of massively increased forest fires, flooding, mass northward-migration, and the rest of it. There is no debate, among the vast numbers of scientists who have studied this from every angle, as to its cause and the immediate and lasting consequences of inaction. We simply have to do our part to change the course of things, for our own sake.

Oregon has long been a leader in renewables, and we're already seeing those investments pay off in our economy. But we're not on track to meeting the carbon emission goals our legislators have set for 2020. If we continue with our current policies, we will fall far behind our peers, surrendering all of those jobs to other states, throwing away a new billion dollar industry, and doing nothing to help our existing outdoor recreation industry.

It's apparent that for at least the next few years the federal government will be playing no role in helping America invest in the future of our energy industries. But we don't need permission from the federal government to do what's best for Oregonians.

The Clean Energy Jobs bill is an affordable way to make critical renewable energy investments in rural Oregon today. Renewables are the future of energy, these jobs aren't going away, and Oregon is well-positioned to be an industry leader. It's taken years of research to get us this close, and our rural and state economies simple cannot afford to pass up on these jobs and investments.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation,
Evan Pierce

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