



February 5, 2020

Senator Dembrow, Chair  
Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
Oregon Legislature

Chair Dembrow and Members of the Committee,

Environment Oregon is a statewide, citizen-based environmental advocacy organization working for clean air, clean water and open space. We have tens of thousands of members from all corners of the state who have made it clear that they are ready for Oregon to take strong action in the fight against climate change.

From the waves that crash on the Oregon coast to the lush vineyards and farmlands of the Willamette Valley, from the waters of the mighty Columbia to the peaks of the Cascade Mountains, from the depths of our lush forests to the grandeur of our western plains, Oregon is a beautiful state. That beauty and, more fundamentally, the very fabric of everything our natural environment provides to make this state so wonderful is threatened by climate change. We get water for our residents and our farmers from snowpack, which is rapidly declining. Our forests are increasingly imperiled by hot and dry weather, forcing Oregon residents and tourists alike inside for weeks at a time. Fish populations are suffering as a result of low water flows and increased temperatures, impacting the tribes and fishermen that rely on them.

The scale of the climate crisis and the urgency with which science tells us we need to act can obscure the fact that the action needed is fundamentally simple: we need to move our energy sources away from dirty fossil fuels and towards clean and renewable energy. A strong cap and invest program provides the opportunity to achieve both of these goals at the same time, ensuring that we draw down our carbon emissions while investing in the clean energy technologies of the future.

This is a crisis, one that deserves to be treated seriously and without compromise. When this legislature takes action on the defining crisis of our times, Oregonians present and future deserve a bill that accomplishes its professed goals, with minimal free allowances and offsets and an aggressive target for curbing emissions.

It's often said that Oregon has the opportunity to be a model for the country and the world in enacting this program. We urge the Oregon Legislature to not to squander that opportunity, and pass a strong, visionary bill to reduce our carbon emissions and invest in a better and brighter future for our state.

Sincerely,  
Celeste Meiffren-Swango  
State Director