

Hello Senators -

Had it not been for a funeral, I would have come today to Salem to testify - vigorously - in favor of SB 1530.

Slowly, over the course of my adult life, the crisis of climate change has grown in clarity and urgency. As a science writer at Brown University, in 2006, I heard about greenhouse gas emissions for the first time through my work. An ecologist at Brown recruited me to help edit a United Nations report on the impact of global warming on food production, posing a potential agricultural crisis through increasing floods, droughts, and the migration and proliferation of pests.

This was the year "An Inconvenient Truth" hit the theaters.

Over time, I watched the starfish disappear from my favorite tide pools in Narragansett Bay. Sentinel species like bats, frogs, bees and butterflies began to die off, quickly, drastically, around the country. Hurricanes Katrina, Sandy, Harvey washed away entire communities. When I returned to Oregon in 2014, the state was in the midst of its longest period of drought - which ended in February 2017 after 270 weeks. Later in 2017, smoke and ash from the Eagle Creek fire forced me and my daughter to flee our home in Fairview for two days because we could not breathe. I've seen the Sandy River so dry that migrating salmon struggle to spawn there.

What I want make plain is that climate change is all around us, right here in Oregon. And it threatens us all. We are all more vulnerable to wildfires, drought, and ecosystem collapse. Nearly every industry in Oregon - agriculture, ranching, fishing, wine-making, timber, tourism - depends on the temperature of our air and water and the amount of rainfall we get. Yet climate change has created chaos in temperature and rain, with both fluctuating wildly. Here in a place known for its moderate, temperate climate, Oregon is getting hotter and drier. This will have a tremendous impact on our safety, on our jobs, and the very beauty that binds every Oregonian. Our way of life - our jobs, our health, our beloved wild places - is at risk. Climate change threatens to consume all our time and attention and tax dollars, wiping out funding for our schools, our roads, our courts and libraries and parks. Please act now.

I write this from my house on a pond here in East Multnomah County. The frogs sang all winter long. Now my daphne bush is blooming. And it's only February 8. Please look around you. Please see the danger. It's not too late - it is never too late - to act boldly to quickly curb our greenhouse gas emissions. Make Oregon an environmental leader again.

Please pass SB 1530, and ensure it is strong and sustainable. Take meaningful action now. I am depending on you, and so is my 17-year-old daughter, and so are the children I know she will have.

Thank you for reading this and I send you all my good wishes for a productive session, one that will see us pass long-due, landmark climate legislation.

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