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Oregon’s landmark climate bill moves toward Ways and Means, historic action

Natural Resources subcommittee OKs HB 2020 after amendment

SALEM – Oregon’s continued response to climate disruption took its next step Wednesday evening, as dozens of statewide organizations, thousands of Oregonians and nationwide observers continue to cheer Salem lawmakers on the verge of adopting landmark legislation.

Lawmakers introduced a final amendment to the Clean Energy Jobs bill, HB 2020, during the first discussions of the legislation in a committee charged with fiscal oversight. Members of the Natural Resources subcommittee of the Joint Ways and Means Committee later approved the Clean Energy Jobs bill in Salem on Wednesday. The bill now heads to the 21-member Joint Committee on Ways and Means for consideration on Friday.

The bill, which caps and prices climate pollution, will help upgrade homes and businesses for money-saving energy efficiency. It can help build more transit options near affordable housing and provide dedicated funds for our Tribal neighbors, a first-time policy in the nation.

“We are excited about the benefits that can flow from this work, including but not limited to further studying energy burden in Oregon, the potential to create a low-income rate class, building capacity and expertise on technological innovation for emissions reductions across many sectors and carbon sequestration,” said **Jana Gastellum, Oregon Environmental Council Climate Program Director**.

Sen. Michael Dembrow’s amendment provides more options for how to use proceeds from the sale of pollution in the transportation sector.

If the Oregon Supreme Court rules that proceeds are not bound by constitutional restrictions, Oregon can use some of those dollars toward buying low to zero-emission fleets, upgrades to other diesel fleets and the creation of a program to trade in old agricultural equipment, similar to “cash for clunkers” programs, with a focus on improving engines most harmful to farmworker health. A second piece to his amendment establishes that certain state-owned forest areas could be used for carbon offset projects over the next six years.

HB 2020 is a call to the nation and international communities that Oregon will do its part to reduce humanity-threatening climate pollution. The bill is the culmination of a

[decade](#) of work supported by numerous elected officials, statewide community leaders, environmental advocates, rural and business leaders and more.

Environmental organizations, including OEC, banded together in 2014 to establish Renew Oregon, which has created a coalition of almost 60 organizations representing Oregonians statewide of various interests, who have demanded bold climate action.

Since February 2018, the [Renew Oregon coalition](#) has enabled more than 1,675 Oregonians from 119 cities (some who traveled hundreds of miles) to attend six Clean Energy Jobs Lobby Days at the state's capital. Most recently, about 200 Oregonians scheduled 50 meetings with 40 lawmakers and their staff to let them know they deeply care about the Clean Energy Jobs bill.

Further Reading and Media:

- [A list and open letter by the near-60 organizations](#) in coalition to support HB 2020, which includes environmental justice, business, labor, agriculture and many more interests. [Video included](#)
- [A history of carbon pricing in Oregon](#)
- OEC and partner visual media: Former California Gov. [Arnold Swarzenegger](#)'s support for HB 2020 (California Governor at the time cap-and-trade passed), Former Vice President [Al Gore](#) endorsement, Agriculture Voices in [Medford](#) and [Noti](#), Oregon, lawmaker voices from [Lobby Day 2019](#), Youth Voices during [Earth Day 2019](#)
- [OEC's Clean Energy Jobs page](#)

For more information about the bill: www.OEOnline.org/CleanEnergyJobs

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