



Oregon Senate Republicans

June 19, 2024

Oregon Department of
Leah Feldon, Director of Environmental Quality
4026 Fairview Industrial Dr SE
Salem, OR 97302

Via Email: Leah.FELDON@deq.oregon.gov

RE: The Re-Establishment of the Oregon Climate Protection Program

Dear Director. Feldon,

The Oregon Senate Republicans are writing to express our deep concern about the potential impacts of the proposed rules on reducing gas emissions in Oregon. As state legislators, we believe that the implementation of such a program in its current form would have adverse effects on energy users and hinder Oregon's housing production goals.

Energy is a critical resource that powers our economy and sustains our way of life. Oregonians across the state rely on affordable and reliable energy to heat their homes, power their businesses, and fuel their vehicles. Therefore, any regulatory changes that impact energy production and consumption must be carefully considered to avoid unintended consequences.

The proposed re-establishment of the Climate Protection Program raises serious concerns about the affordability and accessibility of energy for Oregonians. Imposing stringent regulations and additional costs on energy providers have led to higher utility bills, which have gone up by 32 % since September of 2022, 8,700 cutoffs to Oregonian homes, and has disproportionately affected low-income households and small businesses. Furthermore, these measures could discourage investment in energy infrastructure and innovation, hindering our state's economic growth and competitiveness.

Additionally, we are concerned about the potential impact of the Climate Protection Program on Oregon's housing production goals. Oregon is already facing a severe housing affordability crisis. By increasing the cost of construction through mandated energy efficiency standards and renewable energy systems, the proposed rules could further exacerbate this problem, making it even more difficult for Oregonians to find affordable housing.

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As elected representatives, it is our duty to advocate for policies that promote both environmental stewardship and economic prosperity. We believe that the proposed Climate Protection Program rulemaking is out of your authority, as it is up to the legislative body to direct your agency to create this rulemaking. We will continue to discuss legislation that requires careful consideration to ensure that it does not harm energy users or hinder our state's housing production goals.

We urge the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to reconsider the current proposed rules and at most, pursue a strategy that is more in line with the concerns raised in this letter. We encourage collaboration with stakeholders to develop an approach that protects our environment while also safeguarding energy affordability and supporting housing production goals. It is essential that we work together to find solutions that benefit all Oregonians and ensure a sustainable and prosperous future for our state.

Sincerely,

Oregon Senate Republicans



Sen. Daniel Bonham
Republican Leader



Sen. Dick Anderson



Sen. Brian J. Boquist



Sen. David Brock Smith



Sen. Lynn Findley



Sen. Kim Thatcher



Sen. Dennis Linthicum



Sen. Art Robinson



Sen. Suzanne Weber

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cc: Nicole Singh, Climate Analyst/Rules Coordinator, via email to <Nicole.SINGH@deq.oregon.gov>