

**PRESS RELEASE: For Immediate Release**  
**DATE: July 3<sup>rd</sup> 2019**  
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**SUBJECT: Oregon's Climate Action Program Stymied by Lies**  
**and Misinformation**

Southern Oregon Climate Action Now

**SOCAN**

**Confronting Climate Change**

<https://socan.eco>

Southern Oregonians concerned about global warming and its climate chaos consequences have spent years helping Oregon legislators develop legislation proposing a program that would drive meaningful greenhouse gas emissions reduction in the state. In collaboration with a statewide coalition composed of climate/environmental activists, labor, social justice representatives, and representatives of both parties serving on the Joint Committee on Carbon Reduction HB2020 was developed. We were disappointed to find that HB2020, proposing an Oregon Climate Action Program designed to reduce statewide emissions and invest in our economy, was thwarted in the Oregon Senate. This was apparently achieved on the basis of lies and misinformation about the potential impact of the program on working Oregonians, especially rural residents. As rural Oregonians ourselves, we are well aware that climate chaos driven by human-induced climate pollution is destroying our forests and compromising our agriculture and forestry. In short, climate chaos threatens our economy, our way of life, and the future for our children and grandchildren.

We were delighted, therefore, to support a bill moving through the legislature that not only placed our state on a trajectory of meaningful emissions reductions, but also provided funds that were earmarked for investment in rural Oregon to stimulate our transition from a fossil fuel to a renewable energy economy. While opponents of the legislation attempted to frame the proposal as an urban vs rural Oregonian conflict, the rural Oregonians of SOCAN know better. Indeed, a substantial proportion of the funds raised are earmarked for rural and coastal Oregon. Protecting low-income Oregonians from rate increases blamed on the greenhouse gas emissions reduction program, the program also provides free emissions allowances for utilities. Furthermore, to protect us from rate increases blamed on the greenhouse gas emissions reduction program a rebate was included for users who suffer a fuel price rise due to bill requirements. In addition, the program offers investments in agriculture and forestry practices that promote sequestration of carbon and offers funds to promote forest health.

Funded by corporate interests, opponents of the proposal totally failed to acknowledge the extent to which the proposal would support the Oregon economy and ignored the economic study that projected greater economic growth for Oregon with HB2020 than without it. Rather, they relied heavily on a three-year-old commentary of a different bill that lacked many of the components of HB2020.

Whether the proposal was ultimately stymied by Runaway Republicans who bought into the lies and misinformation and left Oregon rather than doing the job of governing the state to which they were elected, or by wavering Democrats who were similarly influenced by the corporate campaign is unclear. Regardless of the cause, SOCAN encourages our elected officials, from the Governor through the House and Senate not to throw our children and grandchildren under the oncoming bus of climate chaos. Especially, we congratulate Governor Brown for taking a forceful lead in keeping up the fight for a meaningful greenhouse gas emissions reduction program in Oregon, and urge her to use her Executive Authority to best advantage to take us forward.

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