



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF OREGON**

The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 97-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

February 7, 2018

To: House Committee on Energy and Environment
Representative Ken Helm, Chair

Email: hee.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

Re: [HB 4148](#) – Establishes Oregon Energy Board as advisory body for State Dept. of Energy – **Support**

The League of Women Voters has been at the forefront of national efforts to protect air, land and water resources. The League's position is to "Preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of the ecosystem, with maximum protection of public health and the environment" and a focus on demanding pollution prevention. Specific to this position, the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) jointly with League of Women Voters of Oregon (LWVOR) filed two (Sept 2016 and Sept 2017) amicus briefs in the U.S. District Court for the District of Oregon in the (Our Children's Trust) case of *Julianna et al v. United States*. Additionally, the LWVOR signed in March 2016 with 22 other groups and elected officials an amicus brief in the [State of Oregon](#) lawsuit. These lawsuits require the state and federal government to implement a climate recovery plan.

Additionally, in August 2016 the League wrote to Angus Duncan, Chair of the Oregon Global Warming Commission, asking for the commission to review the outdated greenhouse gas emission targets, to reset the reduction targets to ensure we do our part to keep climate warming below 1.5° C and to end this century below 350 ppm CO₂. Our letter suggested:

Specifically address how best to update and implement our State of Oregon Climate Change Plans, provide appropriate funding for this and manage all our resources and related state policies with Climate Change awareness:

- *focusing on the constitutional Public Trust Doctrine (trustee fiduciary requirements to the next generations), and*
- *applying a disciplined science-based climate recovery planning approach as the foundational framework.*

The League supports appropriate efforts to change state organizational structure/framework to better address and manage Climate Change mitigation and adaptation prioritized goals. In general, the League is very disappointed that this session does not address a more comprehensive approach to this urgent need. HB 4148 at least is a small step to move us in the right direction and does provide staff support to the Oregon Energy Board, the Oregon Global Warming Commission, the Oregon Hanford Cleanup Board and the Energy Facility Siting Council.

This testimony recognizes that the greatest environmental/moral challenge facing us at this time is climate disruption. **There is an urgency, according to current science, to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions fast enough to avoid serious damage to the global climate ecosystem.**

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.



Norman Turrill
President



Claudia Keith
LWVOR Climate Change Portfolio

cc: Jason Miner, Governor's Natural Resources Policy Director (jason.miner@oregon.gov)
Ruchi Sadhir, Governor's Energy Policy Advisor (ruchi.sadhir@oregon.gov)

Supplemental – Excerpted from Our Children's Trust HB 4001 testimony – contains specific current science on the urgency of Climate Change

“In order to protect our planet's climate system and vital natural resources on which human survival and welfare depend, and to ensure that young people's and future generations' fundamental and inalienable human rights are protected, government climate pollution policies *must* be based on the best available climate science. There are numerous scientific bases for setting 350 parts per million (ppm) as the uppermost safe limit for atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO₂) concentrations. It is imperative that all states and governments around the world set and implement greenhouse gas (GHG) emission limits targeted at limiting the long-term global temperature increase to no more than 1°C, or a maximum of 350 ppm in global atmospheric CO₂ concentrations by 2100.

If global CO₂ emissions do not increase in 2018 (2017 is the peak year for emissions), emissions reductions begin this year, and we implement global reforestation and improved agricultural practices and policies to sequester 100 gigatons of carbon (GtC) throughout this century, the annual rate of emissions reduction will be ~ 10% per year. If emissions reductions are delayed, the necessary emissions reduction path become steeper and steeper, rendering a return to safe levels of atmospheric CO₂ increasingly unlikely.¹ It is imperative that the State of Oregon establish emission limits consistent with a trajectory aimed at returning atmospheric CO₂ concentrations to below 350 ppm by 2100. The emission limits in HB 4001 and SB 1507 are outdated and not consistent with this trajectory. Put differently, these emission limits would lead to even more catastrophic and irreversible climate change impacts, such as multiple meters of sea level rise, species extinction, more extreme droughts and wildfires, devastating ocean acidification, and others. To be consistent with the best available climate science and the 350 ppm by 2100 trajectory, the State would need to reduce CO₂ emissions by ~ 83% from today's levels by 2035, and reduce by ~ 97% from today's levels by 2050. HB 4001 and SB 1507 should be amended so that Oregon's statewide emission limits are based on today's best available climate science.”

1 James Hansen et al., *Assessing “Dangerous Climate Change”: Required Reduction of Carbon Emissions to Protect Young People, Future Generations and Nature*, PLOS ONE 8:12 (2013).

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