



The League of Women Voters of Oregon (LWVOR) is a 100-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good across rural/urban and party divides. We encourage respectful civil discourse. The League never supports or opposes any individual candidate or political party.

November 18, 2019

To: Representative Karin Power
Representative Pam Marsh

Re: Oregon Resilient Communities Act (ORCA) – Concerns

*The League of Women Voters believes that climate change is a serious threat facing our nation and planet. The League believes that an interrelated approach to combating climate change—including through energy conservation, air pollution controls, building resilience, and promotion of renewable resources—is necessary to protect public health and defend the overall integrity of the global ecosystem. **The League supports climate goals and policies that are consistent with the best available climate science and that will ensure a stable climate system for future generations.***

The League appreciates your legislative leadership, specifically your commitment to ensuring Oregon passes meaningful climate legislation in 2020. We support policies that are based in UN-IPCC science, focused on staying below 1.5c global warming while ensuring a just transition for all Oregonians.

We do have concerns related to your recent proposed Oregon Resilient Communities Act (ORCA):

- 1) **Localized Investments from Transportation Dollars:** Any transportation monies need to be spent on meeting climate goals. That concept is unclear from the ORCA draft. What are the criteria to be used by local governments to select “transportation improvements consistent with local climate goals?” Are these funds dedicated to infrastructure or may they be used for transition to non-emitting vehicles or improving transit services? Do these funds require that formal climate goals be adopted by these municipalities and counties in order to be eligible? Action on climate solutions is urgent. Transportation accounts for 40% of emissions; why is charging within this significant sector delayed for 2 years?
- 2) **Resilient Communities Action Fund and Protecting Low Income Oregonians:** We recognize the need to respond to wildfires and are supportive of some of the recommendations from the 2019 Governor’s Council on Wildfire Response and Clean Water Systems as identified by the 100-year Water Vision. We see where helping assure we have resilient working lands, maintaining and growing family-wage jobs and linking with Oregon’s tribes are positive actions. However, the League supports the inclusion of language from HB2020 B-Eng. (2019) which defines impacted communities within the state. Income level is not the only factor affecting vulnerability to climate instability. Location and varying effects of the changing climate, higher costs due to pricing emissions, and barriers to participation in climate policy-making are also factors to be considered.
- 3) We recommend a section specifically related to **Renewable Energy**: ORCA should have language to prioritize investment in energy generation from renewable resources, distributed energy resources,

transmission and storage projects for renewable energy, demand response, community solar projects and other community-scale renewable energy projects. In fact, these investments should have a higher priority over those listed in your **Resilient Communities Action Fund**.

- 4) **New Policy Targets:** Aggressive targets must reflect returning atmospheric CO2 levels to below 350 ppm by 2100. [UN-IPCC 1.5C recommendation](#) supports reducing global net human-caused greenhouse gas emissions by 45% from 2010 levels by 2030, and net-zero by 2050.
- 5) The League recommends a new section, **Effective and Efficient Governance:** We recommend and agree with [American Institute of Certified Planners](#) Oregon Chapter testimony (2019 [SB 928 A](#)) that an Oregon Climate Authority be adopted. One state agency must have oversight and be accountable for ensuring congruent/cohesive statewide management of climate change mitigation and adaptation policies. This leadership will be especially needed with the varying fund disbursement proposals to assure the funds move Oregon toward the critical climate targets.

We have a moral imperative to all current and future generations of Oregonians. Oregon has an opportunity; we must clearly state the emergency, an existential threat to humanity - and take clear implementable action to address the emergency.

Thank you for your commitment to addressing Oregon's climate challenge. We stand ready to help contribute to this critical Legislative process. But we believe in and support Our Children's Trust legislation: We must take action NOW and it must recognize current science.



Rebecca Gladstone
LWVOR President



Julie Chapman and Claudia Keith
LWVOR Climate Change Portfolio

Cc: Speaker of the House, Tina Kotek, Rep.TinaKotek@oregonlegislature.gov
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