

Southern Oregon Climate Action Now



Confronting Climate Change

<https://socan.eco>

Reference HB3459

Chair Marsh and members of the House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment:

I write as cofacilitator of Southern Oregon Climate Action Now (SOCAN), an organization of over 2,000 rural Southern Oregonians who are concerned about the climate crisis and urge statewide action to address it. The mission of SOCAN is to promote awareness and understanding of the science of global warming and its climate chaos consequences and stimulate individual and collective action to address it. Since rural Oregonians occupy the frontlines in experiencing the impact of the drought, shrinking snowpack, wildfires and extreme weather that the climate crisis imposes, we are strongly committed to statewide action. We are also extremely mindful of the need to maintain a focus on climate justice as we address the climate crisis.

It is in the latter vein that I write on behalf of SOCAN to endorse HB3459.

It is well-demonstrated that low-income families pay a relatively larger percentage of their income on energy than more affluent households. As reported by the U.S> Department of Energy, (Energy.gov undated) “According to DOE’s Low-Income Energy Affordability Data (LEAD) Tool the national average energy burden for low-income households is 8.6%, three times higher than for non-low-income households which is estimated at 3%. In some areas, depending on location and income, energy burden can be as high as 30%.” It is critical that, as we address the climate crisis, we acknowledge that some residents are less able to withstand the economic discomfort caused by the clean energy programs than others. It is also clear that, in Oregon, utility energy is critical to helping residents survive cold winter snaps and extended summer heatwaves. It is critical, therefore, that we establish protections for vulnerable Oregonians to allow them to survive our climate. Thus, we support HB3459.

Respectfully Submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alan R.P. Journet".

Alan Journet

Energy.Gov undated. Low-Income Community Energy Solutions. <https://www.energy.gov/scep/slsc/low-income-community-energy-solutions#:~:text=Energy%20burden%20is%20defined%20as,which%20is%20estimated%20at%203%25>“.