

Opposition to HB 2659

Testimony by Philip H. Carver, Ph.D.¹
On Behalf of 350 Salem Oregon²

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Greetings Chair Helm, Vice Chairs Hartman and Owens, committee members and staff:

The transportation sector is the largest emitter of greenhouse gases in Oregon. The Climate Friendly & Equitable Communities (CF&EC) program by the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) is a major element of state programs to reduce GHG emissions. Please do not move HB 2659 forward as written. This bill would repeal and delay meaningful and urgent action on addressing climate, equity and housing issues in Oregon's communities.

350 Salem OR has been an active participant in the City of Salem's amendments to its comprehensive plan and is involved in its early implementation of the CF&EC rule. The rule does require cities to make some choices on several kinds of city regulations but it does not mandate a particular outcome nor is it a one-size-fits-all solution. The Salem City Council and 350 Salem have recently disagreed on several issues related to climate change. We have concerns about some draft proposals by City staff on implementation of the CF&EC rule. These kinds of disagreements between the City and all parties engaged in the CF&EC implementation are normal and healthy. It shows there is significant flexibility within the rule.

Still, neither we nor the City support HB 2659. Nor is the City a party to the lawsuit against the CF&EC rule.

In addition to being the largest GHG emitting sector in Oregon, transportation is one of the most complex and difficult sectors to address. Having most vehicles operate on electric batteries by 2040 or 2050 is part of the solution. Still, it won't achieve Oregon's GHG emission goals. Changes in land use, as envisioned in the CF&EC rule, are crucial to the needed reductions. As a professional working in Oregon on climate and energy issues for over 40 years, I say with confidence that the world and Oregon are approaching several critical climate tipping points in the next ten or fifteen years. **Delays in action to reduce emissions, such as envisioned in HB 2659, are madness.**

¹ My Ph.D. is in Natural Resource and Utility Economics from Johns Hopkins University. From 1980 to 2017 I worked for the Oregon Dept. of Energy and Public Utility Commission mostly as a senior energy policy analyst.

² 350 Salem OR is a local chapter of 350.org, an international non-profit dedicated to reducing climate pollution and human-caused climate disruptions, such as the 2020 Labor Day Santiam Canyon wildfire, the June 2021 heat dome event and the 2023 "fir-magedon" dieoff of true fir trees in central and eastern Oregon.

There is a [groundswell of deep, diverse, grassroots public support](#) from over 1,600 businesses, organizations, and Oregonians for implementing these rules with urgency.

DLCD is committed to an iterative process of technical adjustments and changes as implementation moves forward. This process is actually happening right now. [DLCD has a schedule for making corrections and clarifications to the CFEC rules](#) based on on-going conversations. We should use these existing processes to resolve CFEC's technical issues.

Given the broad, deep state-wide support and urgent need for the CFEC rule, 350 Salem asks that you work to get cities the funding they need to successfully implement CFEC.

We greatly appreciate your leadership on Oregon's climate, equity and housing issues, and look forward to working with you in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to file written comments.