

Dear Chair Helm, Vice-Chairs Hartman and Owens, and members of the Committee,

As a grandfather, I am doing all I can to ensure a livable future for my grandchildren. As a family physician, I advocate for measures that improve the health of our population. On both counts, I am deeply opposed to HB 2659 that would rescind Climate-Friendly and Equitable Communities rules adopted by LCDC in August 2022.

Many of our cities were built to optimize travel by car. Reducing driving of cars (even of EVs) improves air pollution and makes our people healthier. We need to increase promotion of active transportation (biking and walking) and public transit. Since transportation contributes the biggest amount of climate-destroying emissions in Oregon, modernizing our ways of travel is crucial. Sitting too long contributes to early death, cancer, obesity, heart disease, vascular disease, and back pain. <https://www.yalemedicine.org/news/sitting-health-risks> By reducing commutes and reducing incentives to driving, we can both prevent the worst climate disasters and help people be healthier by being more active.

The CFEC rules were adopted with input from dozens of people from across our state. They are limited to our eight largest urban areas. Reversing these now would be a huge step backwards at a time when it is increasingly clear that we need rapid and effective action to keep our climate from spiraling into a terrible future. We know how devastating huge wildfires, floods, droughts and species loss have been - however, what we have seen is just the tip of the iceberg. To prevent the worst occurring, we need more forward-looking actions like the CFEC rules.

I urge you to vote NO on HB 2659.

Thank you for your service to our great state!
Sincerely,

Joseph Stenger MD
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