



News Release

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SENATOR GOLDEN RESPONDS TO GOVERNOR BROWN'S EXECUTIVE ORDER

Today Oregon State Senator Jeff Golden (Sen District 3) issued the following statement in response to Governor Kate Brown's executive order on reducing greenhouse gas emissions:

"Yesterday, March 10, Governor Brown took a big step that Republican walkouts blocked the legislature from taking. Her historic [Executive Order 02.04](#) kicks into gear a multi-pronged plan to slash our state's greenhouse gas emissions. After so many delays over so many years for so many reasons—the 2019 and 2020 versions were the walkouts—the Governor's decision shows strong, principled leadership.

So it was disappointing to read Senate Minority Leader Baertschiger's statement that the Executive Order proves that she is "not Oregon's Governor," but "Portland's Governor."

That's wrong for a couple of big reasons. Governor Brown was soundly elected by our whole state, and the fact that some Oregonians disagree with her on this issue doesn't change that. And *on* this particular issue, she happens to be carrying out the will of the sizable majority of voters in my district—300 miles south of Portland—who sent me to Salem. They did that after a campaign that I based on the critical importance of fast, aggressive climate action. In my travels across Oregon, I've met and heard from plenty of rural Oregonians, including [hundreds of farmers](#), with the same view. Like my constituents, they wanted SB 1530 to become law.

Senator Baertschiger has responded to my comments by factually pointing out that the Commissioners of Jackson County, where District 3 is located, were among those who issued proclamations opposing SB 1530. Their language included references to the economic harm and "punitive impact" the measure would bring to their constituents, and mine.

I first heard of this proclamation when Senator Baertschiger read it aloud in one of his last appearances on the Senate Floor. Later that day I wrote to the Commissioners to ask if any specific provision of SB 1530, or the content of any non-partisan analysis of the bill, inspired their concern. They have not chosen to cite any content in the nearly three weeks since.

An objective reader of the actual legislation would be deeply puzzled by the Republicans' public explanations of their disappearance from the 2020 session. As a member of the committee that developed last session's HB 2020, I know how dramatically this legislation changed between January of 2019 and February of 2020. The thrust of the significant changes—*many put forward by Republican legislators*—was to further reduce cost burdens on rural Oregon and economically vulnerable Oregonians, and to make sure that the major portion of climate program revenues would flow to rural Oregon.

Those compromises were made, often over the objections of climate action supporters, in good faith. They had no effect on the Republicans' unwillingness come into the Capitol, and haven't reduced the ferocity of the rhetoric. Last week one Republican Senator told reporters that Democrats "are bringing legislation that will burn our communities to the ground."

Without minimizing genuine differences of opinion on climate action, I call on Oregon's political leaders to dial back on the verbal violence, and to communicate with all of our constituents in the most fact-based ways we can. That's a big part of our responsibility to the people we represent as we confront issues with no easy answers. The takeaway of the 2020 session is that Oregon's future is at stake."

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