



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

June 26, 2019

Dear Chief Clerk Sekerak,

I wish to provide a vote explanation for my “yes” vote on House Bill 2007.

Originally, I was concerned about how this bill would impact our rural communities and governments. For example, there are counties in my district on the North Coast that conduct government road maintenance and other work using a fleet of vehicles largely run on diesel. County officials indicated to me that they do not have the resources to convert their fleet within the timelines laid out in the bill, and I absolutely believe that to be the case for most of our rural communities. We also have a significant timber industry in my district, which relies on diesel log trucks. The impacts to jobs that would potentially have occurred because of this bill was a primary concern for me.

I took these concerns to the primary sponsors of the bill and advocated for changes alongside my constituents. Ultimately, there was broad, bipartisan agreement that this bill would be particularly cumbersome to our rural areas. Changes were made, and the bill will not impact businesses in our communities, nor does it require retooling of trucks or other vehicles on the North Coast. Additionally, changes included exemptions to log trucks. The only trucks and vehicles it will impact are those registered in Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington Counties.

As a result, I feel comfortable joining Republicans and Democrats in taking this initial step to start reducing pollution from diesel engines. I understand that in the future, rural communities will also need to work towards similar changes but believe that our rural truckers are already working towards this end as existing trucks naturally age out of use. As the primary cause of carbon pollution in Oregon is in the metro area, I appreciate that this bill brings attention to that works towards the goal of just transition by exempting rural areas.

I also supported the bill because it directs the Department of Environmental Quality to use the Volkswagen Settlement to provide grants that will provide much needed financial assistance to those who need it in achieving the goals of reducing pollution from diesel engines.

Respectfully,

Representative Mitchell

