

David Brock Smith

State Representative

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Committees

Joint Committee on Carbon Reduction–Co Vice Chair
Joint Ways & Means Committee on Natural Resources
Agriculture & Land Use
Natural Resources

OREGON STATE LEGISLATURE 900 COURT ST NE SALEM, OREGON 97301

Op Ed Carbon Cap & Trade HB 2020 2/14/2019

Having been involved with the Oregon carbon conversation for a number of years; attending all of the workgroups during the '17 interim and as a member of the House Energy & Environment Committee during the '17 & '18 Legislative Session, I believe we all can agree that there are changing climate conditions across our landscape. On the global scale, Oregon contributes less than one sixth of one percent of emissions, and so the question is, what do Oregonians do to further reduce their carbon emissions and at what cost to them? Oregonians, and their businesses and industries are already making investments on their own to reduce emissions, and they do so within their free market policies. Prior Legislation has been passed; such as the Low Carbon Fuels Standard (LCFS), that continues to lower emissions as well. So, what's next?

I continue to have the privilege; as the Co-Vice Chair of the Joint Committee on Carbon Reduction, to work with colleagues on answering these questions, and I can tell you that HB 2020 is not the answer. Fellow Committee Co-Vice Chair Bentz, Chairs Power and Dembrow and I, worked on language for a Carbon Reduction bill for many months prior to Christmas of '18. We discussed language to protect children and families, their communities and the businesses that support them. We discussed the gargantuan economic impacts to our working families across the state, and how we might mitigate those impacts. Unfortunately, I feel this work was in vain and powers above the Co-Chairs and Co-Vice Chairs decided to eliminate these mitigating concepts out of HB 2020.

Concerns plague HB 2020, from farm to families to transportation. One example is the estimated \$.15 cent a gallon gas tax increase; although the bill does not call it out as a tax, that is estimated to generate over \$330 million dollars a year. Although constitutionally mandated to be used on roads and bridges, reduce congestion and other transportation related projects, HB 2020 has language that is ambiguous at best and creates a new fund for these dollars where moneys could flow to projects and programs outside of roads, bridges and congestion relief.

Let us all be very clear, Oregonians emit less than one sixth of one percent (0.14%) of carbon. When the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality Director, Richard Whitman, was asked by me in Committee what impact on global carbon would occur if Oregon were to reduce its' emissions to zero, he responded, "Representative Brock Smith you are correct. That Oregon's portion of global carbon emissions is, I'll use the word minuscule." When Dr. Philip Mote, Director, Oregon Climate Services and Oregon Climate Change Research Institute was asked by me what the impact would be on the global climate if Oregon were to reduce their emissions to zero, he responded the impact would be, "Imperceptible."

Proponents of this massive tax know the impacts are 'imperceptible' and 'minuscule', so they have begun to shift their argument for this multi-billion dollar increase on Oregonians to a "moral and ethical" narrative. I believe we have a moral and ethical obligation to keep our children and working families warm, fed and employed, with investments in our children's education, so they may create their own future innovative green energy jobs.

HB 2020 will devastate Oregon families, their communities and the businesses that support them.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "David Brock Smith".

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