

and those with low incomes and in industrial areas, as well as communities of color, experience these effects more acutely.

The money paid by polluters for the ability to pollute then gets invested in clean, locally produced energy, creating in-state jobs. According to PolicyInteractive, “our consumption of CO2 emitting products are almost exclusively purchased outside Oregon, while the investments will be made inside Oregon.”

Bowerman says the bill reduces emissions and makes the largest emitters “pay for the privilege of contaminating the commons.” Some cost will get passed on to the consumer, about \$62 a year, PolicyInteractive’s research shows. But for the \$62 of investment, Bowerman says the return would be more than \$186 per resident.

Not taking action on climate change will cost Oregon over \$1 billion a year, Bowerman says. Implementing it nets Oregon \$1 billion.

Eberhard’s research also shows that the cost of inaction is more expensive than implementing the Healthy Climate Act, in that “climate pollution will cost Oregonians billions of dollars in health-care outlays, vanished salmon and recreation industry losses,” she writes in her analysis of the bill.

According to a report by the Oregon Climate Change Research Institute, Oregon is facing wintertime floods that can damage transportation systems and summertime droughts affecting fresh water for fish and humans. There will be more coastal flooding and more wildfires. Everything from tourism and skiing to the shellfish industry will be negatively affected by climate change.

third of the top donors, individuals and entities combined were from out of state, giving nearly seven times as much as all small donors combined.

Big money drowned out small donors in 2014, the OSPIRG Foundation says.

The Sightline Institute says that coal, oil and gas companies spent \$2 million in Oregon politics in 2014. Sen. Alan Olson received \$17,250 in donations from coal, oil and gas, Sightline says, the third highest in the Oregon State Legislature.

Olson, a Republican, is vice chair of the Senate Environment and Natural Resources committee. Edwards is chair. Also on the committee are Democratic Sens. Floyd Prozanski and Michael Dembrow and Republican Sen. Doug Whitsett. Donations to Olson’s election fund in 2015 included \$1,000 from Idaho Power Company and the Oregon Fuels Association.

The Healthy Climate Act needs to make it out of that committee if it’s going to get voted on by the Senate.

The bill also faces more nebulous money from lobbyists. Sightline says, “Oregon saw \$927,920 of lobbying expenditures from the fossil fuel industry in 2014.”

The Healthy Climate Act is also up against misinformation, according to Julia Olson of Our Children’s Trust. OCT helped draw up the HCA and currently has a climate change lawsuit in Oregon’s U.S. District Court. Olson says that there’s a lot in the HCA that conservatives and Republicans really like, and there are Republican lawmakers who “understand climate change and the threats it poses,” but they are “hamstrung” by partisanship.

youth get their day in court, the discussion will revolve around actual scientific facts.

Olson says her experiences in the halls of the Legislature talking to politicians has shown “they don’t have to look at the facts. I’ll talk about the facts and they will say something completely baseless.” At least in the courtroom, she says, she doesn’t think the fossil fuel industry will perjure itself or try to bring in climate-denier science. “The industry groups have known and admitted for years this is a problem” so they can’t deny the science “as they can do in the media and halls of Congress.”

There will be a hearing on the suit in Eugene March 9, Olson says.

According to Edwards, “This bill is a mechanism to accomplish what the lawsuit says we ought to accomplish — an umbrella policy that provides certainty that Oregon will be meeting its greenhouse gas reduction goals. It’s one more shoulder to the wheel.”

Science is something that Megan Kemple of 350 Eugene wants to see specifically included in the Healthy Climate Act. The bill also faces the challenge of making its way through the committees, votes, bargaining and changes that it takes to get legislation passed in Oregon.

Kemple says the current version of the bill, coming out of the Jan. 14 joint committee meeting, no longer includes language about greenhouse gas limits being set based on best available science, and she wants to see that language back in the bill.

Also of concern to Kemple and other bill supporters is whether transportation fuels, which make up 37 percent of

*The Healthy Climate Act is a 'cap-and-invest' bill that will actually move Oregon to a 'statewide greenhouse gas emissions limit for the year 2050 that limits greenhouse gas emissions to levels that are at least 75 percent below 1990 levels.' In other words, Oregon would be calling a halt to the steady slide of climate change.*

## THOSE OPPOSED?

Historically, Oregonians are not always that fond of our neighbors to the south, but when it comes to battling climate change, California has got us beat. The Golden State passed a bill, AB 32, similar to the Healthy Climate Act, back in 2006 while Oregon was still dithering over a decision to put goals on limiting carbon emissions. Opponents in that state, similar to those opposed to the Healthy Climate Act, said capping pollution would hurt industry.

Bowerman says PolicyInteractive’s research shows otherwise. For example, California has created more than 15,000 job years, with pay scales above \$70,000 in the past five years in the utility-scale solar sector — a “job year” is one job for one year. With a cap-and-invest bill in place for the past 10 years, California has led the nation in job growth and experienced economic growth while lowering greenhouse gas emissions.

California started the trajectory of its greenhouse gas emissions on a downward slope, Edwards says, and “the sky has not fallen even though it was predicted that it would.”

Sounds like a no brainer.

But not so fast.

Edwards says he expects “opposition from usual suspects — utilities, Big Oil and industrial emitters that are more worried about their bottom line than the health of the climate.” The same list of usual suspects that objects to anything that would raise their costs and “meanwhile, the planet continues to warm.”

Big Oil, Big Energy and Big Industry have more than just a tendency to pollute in common. They also have Big Money.

According to a January report by the OSPIRG Foundation (a sister organization to the Oregon State Public Interest Research Group), two-thirds of the top donors who gave \$5,000 or more during Oregon’s last election cycle were entities, not individuals. Businesses, labor groups, nonprofits and other entities gave eight times more than all small donors who donate \$100 or less. One



SENATOR CHRIS EDWARDS

At issue, Olson says, is not only big money from industry groups but the fact that “we have to change our energy sources and do business in a different way; that’s scary to people.” She adds, “There’s fear around change.”

The 21 youth in the constitutional climate change lawsuit are not only up against the government, they are up against three trade associations that represent nearly all of the world’s largest fossil fuel companies: American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers (Exxon Mobil, BP, Shell, Koch Industries, and virtually all other U.S. refiners and petrochemical manufacturers), the American Petroleum Institute (representing 625 oil and natural gas companies) and the National Association of Manufacturers.

Despite a large and well-funded foe, Olson says one advantage to a lawsuit over legislation is that when the 21

Oregon’s greenhouse gas emissions, get regulated early on. While regulations on the other sectors — electric power generation and industrial emissions — would start in 2020, the transportation sector would not start until 2025. That’s the same year the bill calls for emissions to be 20 percent under 1990 levels. “Transportation fuels are not small potatoes,” Kemple says. “They are the largest sector of our greenhouse gases.”

Kemple also says 350 does not want proceeds to go to Oregon’s highway fund, as revenue to that fund will likely not result in projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The Healthy Climate Act faces one more challenge: another climate change bill seeking to make headway in the short session. The Clean Energy and Coal Transition Plan was negotiated behind closed doors by environmental groups and utility companies. Bowerman says that bill is being put forth by a “big four” group of Portland-based environmental groups — Oregon Environmental Council (OEC), Renew Oregon, Climate Solutions and the Oregon League of Conservation Voters (OLCV). Those groups are going for incremental change rather than a comprehensive approach with the energy industry bill, he notes.

Bowerman says now is the time for the Healthy Climate Act, and incremental change is too slow. “There’s no disputing actual numbers. It’s time to cover a lot of ground quickly.”

Kemple adds that those same environmental groups that hashed out the competing bill also have the time and resources to put behind both bills and are supporting the HCA. As for herself, Kemple and other grassroots supporters will be working nonstop to pass the Healthy Climate Act.

“This bill’s going to pass,” Kemple says. “It may not pass in this short session, but we are going to get a cap, if not this session then next.”

The Oregon Legislature’s short session begins Feb. 1.

*A rally for the Healthy Climate Act will be from noon to 1 pm Wednesday, Feb. 3, at the Oregon State Capitol in Salem, 900 Court Street NE. RSVP at [bit.ly/1TDfjot](http://bit.ly/1TDfjot).*