



PUBLIC STATEMENT

SUNRISE PDX OPPOSES CAP & TRADE

February 20, 2020

Sunrise PDX is a local chapter of the national Sunrise Movement. We are an entirely youth and volunteer-led organization dedicated to winning a Green New Deal to combat the climate crisis and building millions of good jobs in the process.

We launched Sunrise PDX in March 2019 in the middle of Oregon's 2019 Legislative Session and watched as the contested Oregon Cap & Trade/Invest Bill (House Bill 2020, 'Clean Energy Jobs') made its way through the legislature. At the time, we held back from weighing in on the issue of Cap & Trade/Invest because we were new to the Portland climate justice movement and were dedicated to building grassroots power, learning from our allies in the movement, and beginning to articulate our vision of the future. We organized against oil terminals and freeway expansions, held forums on the Green New Deal, and mobilized with other youth striking for the climate.

Now, after a process of community education and debate, **Sunrise PDX is formally opposing Cap & Trade/Invest as a strategy to address the climate crisis in Oregon.** We therefore oppose Senate Bill 1530 and we urge our State Legislature to vote against this policy and instead make the Oregon Green New Deal their number one priority in coming sessions. Our hub's decision to oppose Cap & Trade is an articulation of our vision for Oregon's future. We are demanding that our elected leaders oppose fossil fuel projects (such as Jordan Cove LNG and Zenith Energy's tar sands terminal), invest in clean transportation that is accessible for the most marginalized communities (including fareless transportation for youth and no more freeway expansions), and pass an Oregon Green New Deal led by and for the people most impacted by climate change and the transition away from fossil fuels.

It's very clear to us that disagreement on Cap & Trade is still present within the broader climate and environmental justice movement and within communities on the front lines of the climate crisis. We understand that Cap & Trade is a critical issue and that our decision to oppose may differ from the decisions of counterparts in the movement. **We've seen the hard and diligent work that many communities, organizations, elected officials, and tribal governments**

have invested in this legislation over the past several years, and we're incredibly grateful to have so many mobilizing with us against the climate crisis in Oregon.

One of Sunrise's founding principles is "We stand with other movements for change." Regardless of our position on particular policies, Sunrise PDX is committed to working across differences within our broader movement. We will continue to stand with the communities most affected by the climate crisis.

Here are some of the reasons why our members voted to oppose Cap & Trade:

1. We have ten years to cut global emissions in half. Cap & Trade will not get us to this goal on time.

Passing a Cap & Trade/Invest bill in Oregon would cost time and money to create a regulatory framework that would ultimately impede the kind of radical climate legislation our state needs. Climate legislation must address past and present harms to communities while prioritizing the rapid drawdown of greenhouse gas emissions over polluter profit.

2. Cap & Trade is a corporate-backed policy which falsely promises to improve corporate misconduct.

By granting free allowances, offsets, and failing to regulate the full lifecycle emissions of fossil fuel industries, Cap & Trade protects the profits of polluters and does not address the continued injustices perpetuated by polluting corporations. The Green New Deal is a social contract for the 21st Century, one that guarantees all Oregonians a right to a good job and a livable future—no matter where you live or how much money you make. Under a Green New Deal, no community would have to sacrifice their health and safety for the sake of carve-outs and offsets.

3. Climate action should be straightforward and democratic.

Cap & Trade is prioritized by the entities it will regulate because they know its complicated loopholes make it easy to manipulate and bypass. We need to directly regulate the worst industries—by banning fossil fuel expansion and creating a 'cap' without a 'trade'— while explicitly investing in urban and rural communities to transition to a just and sustainable future.

4. Cap & Trade creates an incentive for polluters to sustain or worsen localized hazards for many frontline communities.

No matter how progressive the policy, Cap & Trade inherently poses a threat to communities in the geographic footprint of fossil fuel facilities. By allowing polluters to maintain or even increase localized pollution if they can purchase enough credits, Cap & Trade encourages the creation of sacrifice zones in communities and neighborhoods that are already overburdened with the impacts of pollution hotspots.

5. **Cap & Trade fails to address the massive and continuously increasing threat of fossil fuel use.**

To stop the climate crisis, right now the most crucial step we can take in this global fight is to render the fossil fuel industry obsolete through implementing local and federal Green New Deals. For decades, the industry has known about and concealed the danger of the climate crisis, all while continuing to extract incredible amounts of coal, fracked gas, oil, and tar sands that need to be kept in the ground. In Oregon and the Pacific Northwest, communities have had to stand up and fight an onslaught of fossil fuel export projects proposed solely for the profits of the fossil fuel industry, like the Jordan Cove fracked gas terminal. Policymakers should acknowledge the outsized threat our region faces from the expansion of the fossil fuel industry, and be ready to confront this issue head on.

There is no single solution to the climate crisis. Sunrise's Principle #8 is, "We embrace experimentation and we learn together—we welcome imperfection, share innovations, and learn through honest mistakes followed by honest conversations that help us move forward together. If we see something we don't like, we contribute with something we do like, modeling an alternative." Sunrise PDX is committed to building a movement that can transform what is politically possible. Alongside our environmental and climate justice partners, we will continue to organize, experiment, and struggle for an Oregon Green New Deal and the future we all deserve.

How we reached this decision:

In 2020, Sunrise PDX is concentrating our efforts on Electoral Engagement. Therefore, coming into the Oregon 2020 Legislative Session with Cap & Trade/Invest still being the main climate bill, our organization felt it was strategically important to take a position on the mechanism of Cap & Trade as a way to combat the climate crisis and transition off fossil fuels. We intentionally voted on the broader mechanism of Cap & Trade rather than the specific bill because our ultimate goal was to determine if Cap & Trade aligned with our vision of a Green New Deal and the future we're fighting to win. We hosted an educational forum where we invited local experts to present a pro, con, and neutral position on the topic. After continuous discussion as a hub we conducted an internal vote to determine what public position Sunrise PDX would take on the issue. We had approximately 70% voter turnout (n=42) from our active hub members. The results of our votes are as follows: 4.8% Pro (n=2), 19% Neutral (n=8), 76.2% Con (n=32).