

About the Portland Clean Energy Fund

Proposed Model Policy

The Portland Clean Energy Fund will generate approximately \$30 million a year in new revenue for energy efficiency upgrades, home weatherization, rooftop solar, job training, local food production, and more green infrastructure. The policy would impose a new 1% business license surcharge on the total in-city revenue of retail corporations that have over \$1 billion in previous annual national sales and \$500,000 in annual Portland sales (groceries and medicine would be exempt). As a result, the fee would only hit the largest corporate retail chains in the country while generating significant revenues for in-city renewable energy and job creation.

Major US Corporations are sitting on \$1.9 trillion dollars in cash. Retailers are also responsible for a significant percentage of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions when customer traffic, the greenhouse gas footprint of retail products, and facility operations are considered. These businesses should pay their fair share.

Equity and Justice

The Portland Clean Energy Fund directs its resources to Portlanders who are most impacted by climate change but have been excluded from the emerging low-carbon economy: low-income people and people of color. At least 50% of the Fund's energy efficiency/renewable energy projects "should specifically benefit low-income residents and communities of color;" and at least 20% of all Fund grants "shall be awarded to nonprofit organizations with a mission and track record of programs that benefit economically disadvantaged community members." Nonprofit organizations, alone or in partnership with for-profit companies, schools and/or other government agencies, can apply for grants from the Fund to weatherize homes, install solar and other renewable energy projects, provide job and contractor training, expand local food production and build green infrastructure.

For many current residents below or near the poverty line, staying in existing housing is challenging. That is especially true for people living in houses or apartments without any energy efficiency or renewable infrastructure. This measure will put money into upgrading both residential and multifamily housing in Portland's most vulnerable neighborhoods. For renters it will mean less money spent on utilities and warmer homes. According to the Department of Energy, for every \$1 invested in weatherization \$1.72 is generated in energy benefits and \$2.78 is generated in non-energy benefits such as fewer medical bills and less work time lost.

This will mitigate the number one reason why families in the United States take out predatory payday loans: high utility bills. Landlords who upgrade their properties will be required to limit any rent increases.

Administration of Funds

A grant committee modeled after the successful Portland Children's Levy comprising of nine city residents, appointed every two to four years by the City Council, will oversee competitive proposals for use of the funds. All members of the commission will reflect the racial, ethnic, and economic diversity of experience and backgrounds important for successful implementation of the measure. Each member must have strong interest and experience in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, acting on climate change, and advancing racial and economic equity.

National Impact

With this model policy we have an opportunity to give voice to the desires of millions to lead on responding equitably to climate change and making corporations pay their fair share. Portland has already been a leader on environmental policy by, for example, prohibiting the construction of bulk fossil fuel infrastructure. This is an opportunity for Portland to continue to be a national leader. Environmental author, journalist, and founder of 350.org Bill McKibben says:

"Big business has been in the way of common-sense climate solutions for decades, and it's time for that to stop. This initiative is a powerful reminder that the burden of this crisis falls hardest on those who've done the least to cause it, and posits a future that works for all of us!...If Portland sets this precedent, I believe it will become yet another model for cities everywhere."

Who is involved

Over 150 community organizations, businesses, and faith leaders have endorsed the Portland Clean Energy Fund and the initiative will be the first major environmental policy led by and created by communities of color in Oregon history. The campaign is being led by a coalition comprising of the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO), Coalition of Communities of Color (CCC), NAACP Portland Branch 1120, Native American Youth & Family Center (NAYA), and Verde. High-capacity environmental organizations also participate in the steering committee: 350 PDX; Audubon Society of Portland; Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility; Oregon Chapter, Sierra Club. Other endorsers of the initiative include:

- 350.org
- Bill McKibben
- Naomi Klein
- A&R Solar
- Abacus Energy
- AFSCME Local 189, 2505, 3336, 3580, and 88
- Alissa Keny-Guyer, State Representative, House District 46
- Alliance for Democracy
- Alpha Energy Savers
- Birdsmouth Construction

- Center for a Sustainable Economy
- Center for Biological Diversity
- Climate Action Coalition
- Climate Jobs PDX
- Community Alliance of Tenants
- Community Energy Project
- Constructing Hope
- Democratic Socialists of America (Portland Chapter)
- EcoFaith Recovery
- Enhabit
- Food and Water Watch
- Green Lents
- Hacienda CDC
- Home Performance Guild
- Human Access Project
- Human Solutions
- Jubilee Oregon
- The League of Women Voters of Portland
- Lew Frederick, State Senator, Senate District 22
- Main Street Alliance
- Mixteca Catering
- Mudbone Grown
- Multnomah County Democrats
- National Association of Letter Carriers, Branch 82
- Neighbors for Clean Air
- New Foods Market
- OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon
- Orange Splot
- Oregon Consumer League
- Oregon Latino Health Coalition
- Our Children's Trust
- Passive House NW
- Portland Area CSA
- PDX Harbor Community Coalition
- Right 2 Survive
- Rose CDC
- SEIU Local 49
- Sunbridge Solar
- Sustainable Energy & Economy Network
- Synchro Solar
- Tawna D. Sanchez, State Representative, House District 43
- Tivnu: Building Justice
- Urban Greenspaces Institute
- Urban League of Portland
- Unitarian Community for Earth
- Willamette Riverkeepers