

House Bill 2186:

Low-Hanging Policies to Fight Climate Change

House Bill 2186 contains a set of policies to reduce Oregon's global warming impact. The policies are based on studies of which actions create significant benefits with relative ease, and have additional safety, consumer, and energy benefits. Tire efficiency, idling reduction, low-emission fuels, product composition, and truck aerodynamics have been studied for decades, and specific policies have been considered throughout the country on these issues for at least the past six years.

The bill has been significantly narrowed since introduction. Under the amended version (-5 amendments are pending), the bill gives Oregon's Environmental Quality Commission (EQC) the authority to consider and adopt rules on:

Reducing Pollution from Fuel by 10% by 2020

A low-carbon fuel standard could require providers of transportation fuels to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions of the fuel mix they sell into Oregon by 10% by 2020. The standard would allow providers to choose how to reduce emissions while meeting consumer demand. For example, providers could purchase and blend more low-carbon biodiesel into diesel products, purchase credits from electric utilities supplying low-carbon electrons to electric passenger vehicles, diversify into low-carbon hydrogen, and more.

This approach has been studied comprehensively since 2003 by California to ensure the most effective, scientifically based standard. California has a comprehensive standard scheduled for adoption this year, and their years of work can be drawn on and adjusted for Oregon, preventing us from reinventing the wheel. Similar standards are under consideration by roughly a dozen other states.

The rules apply only to gas and diesel and their substitutes, and allow for a phased-in schedule, provide quality assurance, and allow deferrals and exemptions as necessary to ensure adequate fuel supplies.

Improving Aerodynamics in Trucks

The EPA's SmartWay program helps truck owners add fairings and other items to increase efficiency. Since freight hauling is responsible for about 20% of transportation greenhouse gas emissions, small improvements can have big impacts. Nationally, SmartWay expects to eliminate 33 to 66 million metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions and up to 200,000 tons of nitrogen oxide emissions per year by 2012.

Under the bill the EQC could require heavy-duty long-haul trucks to improve their aerodynamics, thereby improving fuel efficiency, saving money on fuel, and reducing air pollution. Rules would allow for a phased-in schedule and exempt the industry if financing is not available. Cascade Sierra Solutions, a company headquartered in Coburg, provides financing for such improvements, allowing truck owners to borrow money for equipment and pay it back over time as fuel savings return.

Reducing Wasteful Idling by Trucks and Ships

Reducing idling saves money and reduces pollution. In developing rules to reduce idling, the EQC would be required to consider situations where idling is necessary. When establishing idling requirements for ships, the rules must consider international protocols and funding for port idling facilities.

Saving Consumers Money with Low Rolling Resistance Tires

Since the 1980s, car manufacturers have used low rolling resistance tires, allowing cars to receive higher EPA miles-per-gallon scores. Variations of rolling resistance of 20 to 30 percent are common, and often

knock-off replacement tires do not meet standards of tires that came with vehicles when purchased. A set of efficient tires can cost \$7 to \$12 more per set, but that is quickly returned in fuel savings, as tires can reduce fuel consumption by 1.5% - 4.5% (saving \$50 to \$150 over the lifetime of the tires). The bill prohibits rules that would adversely affect safety or tire life, and requires the rules to be cost-effective. The rules are aimed at standard road tires, and would exempt deep-tread tires, snow tires, spare tires, specialty tires, and motorcycle tires, and emergency vehicles. The rules would be coordinated with those of other states, allowing stores in multiple states to easily conform.

Preventing Tampering with Emission Control Systems

Rules could prevent tampering with motor vehicle systems designed to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants.

Substitutes for Products Containing High-Potency Greenhouse Gases

Substituting safe, cost-effective alternatives for the high-potency greenhouse gases found in certain consumer and commercial products (used as refrigerants or propellants) makes environmental and economic sense. Rules would only apply to high-potency greenhouse gases, which trap heat hundreds or thousands of times more than carbon dioxide. Once these gases are put into products they will eventually end up in the atmosphere, where they can stay for decades or centuries, so prevention is the best strategy. The bill cannot require new products or reformulation of productions, as it allows regulation only when substitutes are commercially available.

The rules would not apply to carbon dioxide (contained in food and other products), off-gassing from decomposition, or incidental greenhouse gases (such as trace amounts in air contained in a products packaging).

Concerns about the bill have been addressed

<i>Concern</i>	<i>Response</i>
Tire standards too broad	Narrowed so that rubber and tire manufacturers have withdrawn opposition; bill includes safety, cost-effectiveness, tire durability requirements
Product regulation too broad	Narrowed to high-impact gases other than carbon dioxide where substitutes are already commercially available; bill includes overall requirements for cost-effectiveness and flexibility to ease compliance
Aftermarket car parts	Removed from bill; parts suppliers have withdrawn opposition
Delegation of authority	Comprehensive narrowing of scope of bill; requires reporting to interim committee and each legislature; revokes rulemaking authority on fuels in 2020

More information

Tires	http://www.green Seal.org/resources/reports/CGR_tire_rollingresistance.pdf
SmartWay	http://www.epa.gov/OTAQ/smartway/index.htm
Cascade Sierra Solutions	https://secure.cascadesierrasolutions.org/index.php
Reducing idling	http://www.epa.gov/otaq/diesel/idle-ncdc.htm
High potency gases	http://www.epa.gov/highgwp/scientific.html
Low polluting fuels	http://www.arb.ca.gov/fuels/lcfs/lcfs.htm