

State of
Washington
House of
Representatives



April 7, 2021

The Honorable Laurie Jinkins
Speaker of the House

The Honorable Pat Sullivan
House Majority Leader

The Honorable Joe Fitzgibbon
Chair, House Environment & Energy

The Honorable Jake Fey
Chair, House Transportation

CC: House Democratic Caucus

RE: Carbon Reduction and House Transportation Package

We write to you today urging you to continue to move Washington STRONG forward and provide House Democrats and our transportation committee with options to:

- address our urgent need to take action to meet our climate goals
- provide billions in immediate infrastructure investment and thousands of jobs
- achieve a transportation package that meets our needs and boosts our economy

As we approach the end of session, we need to be clear about our options for making progress on the climate crisis this year. We cannot afford to leave Olympia without enacting real, substantive policy to seriously curb our greenhouse gas emissions. The climate crisis simply won't wait for us to take action any longer, and we should be looking at every viable solution to bring our entire state together in tackling this enormous challenge. And we don't want to put a robust transportation package at risk because we didn't pursue all the options.

Two carbon pricing bills have been proposed this year, taking a different approach to carbon pricing and transportation. Both bills have had hearings in the Senate, and both have been examined by policy experts and advocates, and there's plenty of data available from California's cap and trade implementation. We owe our constituents a thorough review of both bills.

Washington STRONG has broad public and stakeholder support. In fact, with over 1,000 people signing in PRO in its hearing, it broke a record as the most supported climate bill in the history of the legislature. My colleagues and I have also had dozens of conversations with industry and business leaders, and they prefer a straightforward carbon tax to a cap and trade regime because of the predictability of a carbon tax and their ability to plan around it with certainty.

In an unrelated, but simultaneous effort, our House Transportation colleagues worked all summer long and reached out to thousands of people and organizations. Through that process they heard a strong recommendation to pursue a carbon tax. Stakeholders felt it was more fair, transparent, and would raise sufficient revenue to address climate change. That is why the House proposed transportation package included it.

We commend the stakeholding done by WA STRONG's sponsors. They held nearly 200 meetings with more than a hundred stakeholder groups to make sure those who have resisted prior carbon tax proposals felt included and listened to in the development of this policy. As a result, the bill specifically sets aside 25% of its revenue for investments in rural areas and links its investments to independent analyses of where communities have been most negatively affected by carbon pollution to ensure an equitable distribution of funding. Those concrete benefits give us much more ammunition to defend the policy from misinformation.

The proponents of WA STRONG did an admirable job uniting the community and stakeholders in support of their bill, demonstrated by the overwhelmingly positive testimony.

Let's have an open, transparent, public process that respects the time and energy members of the public put into making their concerns known to us. Please move WA STRONG forward and send a clear message that the House will deliver on our promise to effectively address climate change, the COVID crisis, economic recovery, and racial equity.

In Solidarity,



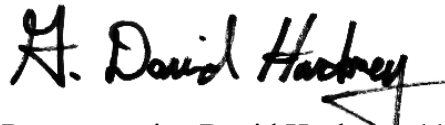
Representative Emily Wicks, 38th LD



Representative Shelley Kloba, 1st LD



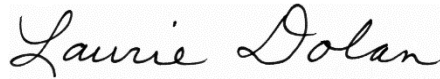
Representative Bill Ramos, 5th LD



Representative David Hackney, 11th LD



Representative Strom Peterson, 21st LD



Representative Laurie Dolan, 22nd LD



Representative Jessica Bateman, 22nd LD



Representative Tarra Simmons, 23rd LD



Representative Jamila Taylor, 30th LD



Representative Jesse E. Johnson, 30th LD



Representative Cindy Ryu, 32nd LD



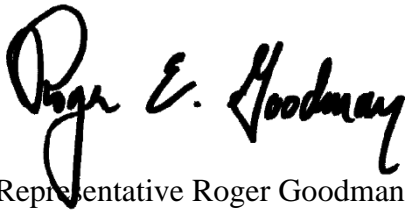
Representative Kirsten Harris-Talley, 37th LD



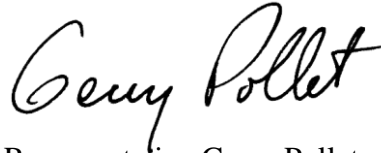
Representative Mike Sells, 38th LD



Representative Debra Lekanoff, 40th LD



Representative Roger Goodman, 45th LD



Representative Gerry Pollet, 46th LD



Representative Javier Valdez, 46th LD