

[SB21-200 Reduce Greenhouse Gases Increase Environmental Justice](#)

Wednesday, April 28 2021

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Testimony from Kelly Brough, President and CEO, Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce

Thank you, Madame Chair and members of the committee, for the opportunity to provide this written testimony today. My name is Kelly Brough and I am the president and CEO Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce. I write today on behalf of the Chamber, our 3,000 members and their 400,000 employees, to express opposition to Senate Bill 200.

We know that greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced and many of our employers have taken steps to do just that. But this bill causes serious concerns because it creates hard targets that don't take into account all the work and challenges happening today, including the Governor's own stakeholder process to inform his greenhouse gas reduction plan, existing goals in place and current technology needs. Of greatest concern is the hard targets for specific industries in this bill do not ultimately reduce carbon emissions for our region, but rather shift those emissions from one part of the industry to another. Rather than building on the work done to date including HB 1261, Senate Bill 200 requires some sectors to actually start over, particularly in the utility sector. It would establish an unrealistic 100-percent greenhouse gas emission reduction requirement for the utility sector by 2040, a target we all know can't be met with the current technology available.

Further, this legislation did not go through a robust stakeholder outreach process—a process that could have addressed carbon-shifting concerns and would have raised the need for consumer and reliability protections.

Colorado is leading the nation in its groundbreaking efforts. SB 200 gets in the way more than it would help or strengthen the process. This bill circumvents the process in place today, clouds the progress made to date, removes flexibility and discourages innovation. We encourage you to vote no on SB 200.

Senate Finance

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SB21-200 Reduce Greenhouse Gases Increase Env'tl Justice

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Megan Wilder For Self	<p>Please support SB21-200 to Reduce Greenhouse Gases Increase Environmental Justice. This law would help us meet our modest climate goals, protect public health and build back better.</p> <p>We must set clear deadlines for the Air Quality Control Commission (AQCC) to adopt regulations to meet each sector specific goal. This bill would ensure that electric providers file timely and meaningful emission reduction plans. This bill would also create additional funding by closing a loophole that currently lets polluters off the hook. We must also empower our communities, help the most impacted communities and work towards restorative justice.</p>
Ron Bennett For Self	<p>Please support SB21-200. Fugitive methane emissions from the oil and gas sector in Colorado are a potent climate pollutant and this bill is a step in the right direction to curb those emissions. A recent global spike in atmospheric methane levels is fueled by fracking and leaky gas infrastructure. New reports indicate that efforts to reduce methane emissions create jobs and improve air quality at little or no net cost. Inger Andersen, executive director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) describes cutting methane emissions as “our best shot to slow climate change now.” Please refer to this op-ed regarding a forthcoming report on methane from the UNEP... https://thehill.com/opinion/energy-environment/548753-our-best-shot-to-slow-climate-change-now-cut-methane</p> <p>Thank you for your time and your leadership.</p> <p>-Ron Bennett</p>
Paul Culnan For Self	<p>I support SB21-200, titled ‘Reduce Greenhouse Gases Increase Environmental Justice,’ sponsored by Faith Winter, Dominick Moreno and Dominique Jackson. This law would improve Colorado’s regulatory framework for addressing climate change by strengthening the ability of the AQCC to enforce sector specific emissions-reduction targets and advance environmental justice outcomes.</p> <p>I support the Following Aspects of SB21-200:</p> <p>I am very much in favor of allocating funds to the environmental justice ombudsperson and creating an environmental advisory board.</p> <p>I am very much in favor of enforcing equitable climate regulations for emissions reductions in all sectors of our Colorado economy.</p> <p>I am very much in favor of considering the social cost of carbon and methane in the economic impact analysis of rules and regulations.</p>

	<p>I am very much in favor of adding CO2 and methane to the definition of regulated pollutant.</p> <p>I am very much in favor of giving the AQCC the power and flexibility to set emission caps by economic sector.</p> <p>We must codify the aspirational goals of the Colorado GHG Emissions Reduction Roadmap.</p> <p>We are in a climate emergency worldwide and here along the front range we are also in an air quality emergency. Fossil fuels are the major contributor to both emergencies. We must stop burning fossil fuels as quickly as possible.</p> <p>Fortunately, developing and using renewable energy adds jobs, cleans the air, improves health in our frontline communities, and slows the onslaught of climate change.</p> <p>Thank you for your support of our environment, health, and economy.</p>
<p>Leigh Schmidt For Self</p>	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Leigh Schmidt, I'm a sophomore in high school, and I am representing myself. I stand in support of SB 200: Reduce Greenhouse Gases Increase Environmental Justice.</p> <p>The climate crisis is an existential threat to our planet, and, as a young person, it threatens my future. It's scary knowing that, unless world leaders act now, my future is in jeopardy. I rely on my legislators to protect the planet we all call home.</p> <p>Current law requires certain greenhouse gas reductions that match those agreed upon by the scientific community. But the roadmap in place now won't meet those goals because it doesn't have concrete steps to do so. SB 200 would protect my future by helping Colorado meet these reduction goals and by speeding up the reductions process.</p> <p>Our state desperately needs a just transition to a renewable economy. We can achieve that by requiring regulators to recognize environmental racism and the social impacts of the climate crisis. This bill would do just that.</p> <p>I urge the committee to vote "yes" on SB 200. My generation's future is in your hands. Can we count on you to protect it?</p> <p>Thank you.</p>

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I am a father. And, an Environmentalist, Marine, entrepreneur and activist. I believe in the utopian ideals that humankind has tried to live up to since we started developing ethical, moral and legal standards. I believe the issues of climate change are here and increasing rapidly. I refuse to stand idly by while my son's future – and all our future – is further endangered by inaction.

We stand at a turning point that also gives us an enormous opportunity. We can seize this chance, choosing to move forward, transforming the remains of our previous capitalist, consumption-driven economy & society into a new, just, clean, cooperative society that works for all of us and is harmonious with our environment. Taking these steps forward will be challenging – no doubt. Thankfully, the future rewards gained by these efforts are exponentially greater. We are also very lucky to be able to match this moment with unprecedented fervor and dedication.

The news of our current climate crisis has become ubiquitous and, at times, overwhelming. Earth's atmosphere now has the highest level of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) ever measured. Oceans are already rising, filling with plastic and acidifying. Storms are now superstorms. Climate refugees (often caused by the effects of superstorms) are no longer a possible future issue – they exist now.

But, what is ocean acidification and how does that affect Colorado? Fair question - especially since we don't have any oceans. Ocean acidification occurs when the ocean absorbs excess CO₂ from the atmosphere, which then reacts with water to form carbonic acid. This process decreases the pH of the ocean, moving it towards the acid end of the scale. We must remember the health of global ocean life is directly correlated to all life on our fragile home. Here in Colorado, we will most likely feel these impacts economically as through the rising costs of seafood and, eventually, everything that travels on the oceans.

In Colorado, there have been eight extreme storms or weather events - each with a cost of \$1B or more - in the last two decades. These events include the 2013 floods, which left 9 Coloradans dead and caused \$1.7B in damage, and a hail storm in July 2009, dumping more than 8 inches of hail with a damage price tag of \$1.2B. Storms like these are much too expensive - both economically and in lives lost or permanently damaged.

And, while this information can often be debilitating, the antidote to despair is action.

Among the necessary actions available to us, perhaps the most important and influential is the creation and implementation of effective climate policy. We need policy to help us mitigate and adapt to the current and future effects of climate change. This includes state and local policies addressing environmental justice, social equity, energy creation, use and efficiency, transportation, and many more. These policies are being brought forward now at every level and we must press on to ensure they are passed.

One such policy that is in process in Colorado right now is Senate Bill 21-200 (SB21-200), Reduce Greenhouse Gases Increase Environmental Justice. This bill, introduced by Senators Winter and Moreno along with Representative Jackson is "under consideration." SB21-200 includes provisions that add greenhouse gases (GHGs) to be defined as a "regulated pollutant", directs the Air Quality Control Division (AQCD) to include social costs of carbon and methane in future economic analyses. Perhaps most progressive, however, is a requirement to use funds from annual GHG fees to establish an environmental justice advisory board (EJAB).

While it's true that an "advisory board" would have no direct control of or power over laws or policies, such a board - when truly made up of a diverse cross-section of the state population - has immense influence on the creation and implementation of ALL laws and policies. A state-based EJAB could have purview over all laws, regulations and policies to ensure their implementation does not exacerbate or create an environmental injustice. A possible model for this new

board is the New York City EJAB. They've envisioned their board's mission to begin with its establishment of local leaders and experts, conduct a study to recognize and then publish EJ concerns, and, finally, to create a "citywide plan to incorporate EJ concerns into City decision-making and identify City initiatives for promoting EJ." Using this methodology, the Colorado EJAB would be better able to fully advise on present and future statewide EJ concerns.

SB21-200 is not perfect, of course, but it is needed – now, more than ever. So, let's remember that democracy is not a spectator sport! Contact your state representatives and support this bill. Contact your city and county representatives to ensure their support and ask if they have a similar bill in place – and if not, why not?

As a citizen we have enormous power to shape the world we live and work in. Own your power and use it to help us continue moving forward towards a future with a clean environment, plenty of opportunity and increased equity.