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QuickPoint! – Cap Taxes or You’ll Trade Business

By Miranda Bonifield

You may not be able to tax carbon out of existence, but you can tax agriculture out of business. That’s the refrain of Timber Unity, the coalition which sees the resurrection of last year’s cap-and-trade bill as a threat to businesses which have called Oregon “home” for decades. One woman at the Timber Unity protest in Salem February 6 said she would see an additional \$45,000 in taxes if SB 1530 passes. That’s a non-starter for small businesses whose profit margins are often in the single digits.

In other words, [hardworking people](#) will be put out of business if this bill passes: folks who brought their trucks from around the state before dawn to remind Salem what the voice of Oregon sounds like. The atmosphere among the thousands gathered wasn’t tense or angry. The thousands gathered were just ordinary people who care about the environment and want to make an honest living.

Timber Unity [has proposed alternatives](#) that could help continue the downward trend of carbon emissions, which are already [at their lowest level per capita since 1960](#). But a bipartisan compromise or [referring the issue to voters](#) don’t seem to be options. (Perhaps that’s because [we already know](#) passing a carbon tax would be a hard sell at the ballot box.)

As Senator Betsy Johnson (D, Scappoose) said, “Real Oregonians are affected by what we do in this building. ... This was a bad bill last session. It’s a bad bill this session.”

Miranda Bonifield is a Research Associate at Cascade Policy Institute, Oregon’s free market public policy research organization.