

Testimony Wednesday May 10, 2017 in front of Portland City Council

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Mayor and council:

My name is Melanie Plaut

I am an OBGYN Physician. When I retired last year I decided that climate change was my number one priority. In the last few months I have met with staff in all your offices to talk about Carty gas plants and a transition to renewables.

You've probably heard this quote before: "The planet isn't dying. It's being killed by people. And those people have names and addresses". Today I am asking you to act bravely to be sure that those addresses don't belong to those of us who live in Portland.

On June 1<sup>st</sup> The Council will vote on the 100% by 2050 plan put forth by Mayor Wheeler. I urge you to keep this resolution strong. You may already be hearing from those in industry who say it isn't feasible, for one reason or another.

This simply isn't true. All it takes is the will to do it.

In order to keep our beautiful planet livable, we need to enact a fossil fuel freeze as soon as possible, and start an immediate transition to renewable energy.

Think about these dates for a minute:

First: 2050 – knock wood, we will all live that long. By then we need to have decarbonized our electricity, transportation and heating sectors in order to limit warming to 2 degrees centigrade.

Next: 2100. In my work I delivered thousands of babies.

Babies born in this town yesterday will likely see that year. If we don't act bravely today, those babies might face a world that borders on uninhabitable. These are not hypothetical people. They are here right now. With luck and hard work we can bequeath these new Oregonians a world where global warming is actually being reversed, or as Paul Hawken calls it, a drawdown (1).

To get there, a recent paper from the journal Science (2) offers a handy rule of thumb we can use. It's sort of like Moore's law, that semiconductor chips double in performance every 18 months.

Here's the rule of thumb: We need to cut our CO2 emissions **in half every decade**.

So, some more dates:

Between 2020 and 2030 we have to cut emissions in half.

Then half again between 2030 and 2040; and so on.

Now to bring this back to the June 1<sup>st</sup> resolution, I urge you to do three things:

1. Stick to the goal date of 2030 for 100% clean/renewable electricity (not 2035). Other larger cities are doing it even sooner (3). Companies like Apple are moving faster. It isn't radical. We can do it. Electricity is about 30 % of our carbon emissions (4), so we have to do this if we are going to meet the rule of thumb.
2. Don't be seduced by dirty alternatives like nuclear, biomass, waste incineration, or any kind of fossil fuels – keep a strict definition for what is permissible.
3. Let's have a just transition. This is going to require big changes. Some of them are going to fall hardest on those who are already suffering the most. We can help with that if we partner with those communities.

Finally: if you haven't already, please submit your comments to the PUC, opposing PGE's plan to build new gas plants at Carty, before this Friday May 12<sup>th</sup>. And join the public in testifying to the PUC on this issue the evening of Monday 15<sup>th</sup>. New fossil fuel infrastructure is completely incompatible with a transition to clean energy.

We the people of Portland ask you do what is right, and make a rapid and just transition to 100% clean and renewable energy. We're counting on you.

Thank you for allowing me time to testify. I am happy to answer any questions.

Melanie Plaut MD  
melanie.plaut@gmail.com

1. Drawdown, ed. Paul Hawken
2. "A roadmap for rapid decarbonization", Johan Rockström et al, *Science* 24 Mar 2017: Vol. 355. Issue 6331, pp. 1269-1271
3. <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?NID=2948>
4. <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/sources-greenhouse-gas-emissions>

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[Meghaan.davis@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:Meghaan.davis@portlandoregon.gov)



Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail.

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**From:** Jennings, Gayla  
**Sent:** Monday, March 06, 2017 4:47 PM  
**To:** Melanie Plaut <[melanie.plaut@gmail.com](mailto:melanie.plaut@gmail.com)>  
**Cc:** Davis, Meghaan <[Meghaan.Davis@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:Meghaan.Davis@portlandoregon.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Testifying Wednesday mornings

Good afternoon, Melanie,

Thank you for your inquiry. Auditor Mary Hull Caballero provide me with your email so that I may reply.

The Auditor's Council Clerk's Office can assist members of the public with signing up for the Communications portion of the weekly City Council meeting agenda which provides individuals with the opportunity to discuss the topic of their choice. I've copied a member of the Council Clerk's Office, Meghaan Davis, to assist you further.

Thanks!

***Gayla Jennings***  
Deputy Auditor | Office of the City Auditor  
City of Portland, Oregon  
Phone (503) 823-3560

**From:** Melanie Plaut [<mailto:melanie.plaut@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 06, 2017 3:58 PM  
**To:** City Auditor, Mary Hull Caballero <[AuditorHullCaballero@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:AuditorHullCaballero@portlandoregon.gov)>  
**Subject:** Testifying Wednesday mornings

I understand citizens can testify on topics of their choice on Wednesday mornings.

Can you point me to where one signs up?

Thanks!

Melanie

**Davis, Meghaan**

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**From:** Melanie Plaut <melanie.plaut@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 20, 2017 8:16 AM  
**To:** Davis, Meghaan  
**Subject:** Re: Testifying Wednesday mornings

I'll take May 10th.  
Thanks!

On Mar 20, 2017, at 8:14 AM, Davis, Meghaan <[Meghaan.Davis@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:Meghaan.Davis@portlandoregon.gov)> wrote:

The earliest date available is may 10<sup>th</sup> or may 17<sup>th</sup> which one would you like?

Meghaan Davis  
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**From:** Melanie Plaut [<mailto:melanie.plaut@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 18, 2017 11:49 AM  
**To:** Davis, Meghaan <[Meghaan.Davis@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:Meghaan.Davis@portlandoregon.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: Testifying Wednesday mornings

Meghaan-  
Thanks for getting back to me.  
My topic is moving Portland to 100% clean energy and threats to the city from climate change.

On Mar 10, 2017, at 2:28 PM, Davis, Meghaan <[Meghaan.Davis@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:Meghaan.Davis@portlandoregon.gov)> wrote:

Hello Melanie,

I can help you sign up for a communication slot. Just let me know your topic and I can supply you with a date that has an opening.

Thank you,

Meghaan Davis  
OSS II | Office of the City Auditor  
The City of Portland, Oregon

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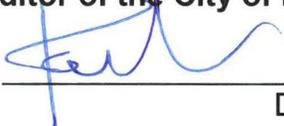
Request of Melanie Plaut to address Council regarding moving Portland to  
100% clean energy and threats to the City from climate change  
(Communication)

MAY 10 2017

PLACED ON FILE

Filed MAY 02 2017

**MARY HULL CABALLERO**  
Auditor of the City of Portland

By  Deputy

COMMISSIONERS VOTED AS FOLLOWS:		
	YEAS	NAYS
1. Fritz		
2. Fish		
3. Saltzman		
4. Eudaly		
Wheeler		