

February 19, 2023

Dear Colorado Legislators,

I am strongly opposed to HB23-1163. This bill would be extremely detrimental to the state of Colorado, the world, and the fight against human caused climate change. The verbiage included in HB23-1163 is dangerous and could perpetuate climate denial.

While carbon dioxide is a “building block to all life” as the bill states, the bill does not address the fact that human activity is consistently increasing carbon dioxide in the atmosphere AND, simultaneously, increasing deforestation activities. So while plant life may in some way be “benefiting”, as this bill seems to claim, from the increase in carbon dioxide, there are less plants to absorb the carbon dioxide that is being emitted. Additionally, the bill doesn’t address any of the negative consequences of increasing carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

The definition of pollutant according to Dictionary.com is “any substance, as certain chemicals or waste products, that renders the air, soil, water, or other natural resource harmful or unsuitable for a specific purpose.” Carbon dioxide is the primary greenhouse gas emitted through human activities. Greenhouse gases trap heat in our atmosphere causing climate change. Climate change is making our planet less suitable for life by increasing the frequency and severity of weather events, degrading air quality, ocean acidification, rising sea levels, displacing people and animals, and more because of climate change. Carbon dioxide is clearly a pollutant by this definition.

To avoid the main impacts of climate change, global warming must not increase by more than 1.5 degrees Celsius. However, we have already increased to about 1.1 degrees Celsius. The warming that has already happened is primarily because of Carbon Dioxide. If this bill passes and Carbon Dioxide is deregulated, how will we have any chance of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees?

Coloradans are already feeling the effects of climate change. Colorado wildfires have become increasingly worse over the last several decades. Scientists have stated many times that a warmer climate has increased the frequency and magnitude of wildfires, which emit carbon themselves and put us into a positive feedback loop. I live in fear of the next wildfire that we will experience since the Marshall fire was not all that far from my home.

HB23-1163 is bad for Colorado and bad for the world. This would undo so much of the good that we have done in Colorado to slow climate change and put us even more behind. The clock is ticking and we don’t have a moment to lose. Please vote no on HB23-1163.

Sincerely,

Shelby Behr