



# WILLAMETTE WE

## No American City Has Ever Tried a Climate Justice Tax Like the One Portland Is Launching. What's the Plan?

It's a local version of the Green New Deal proposed in 2019 by U.S. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

By Nigel Jaquiss | Published January 8 at 5:37 AM Updated January 8 at 9:30 AM

In just a few months, the city of Portland will begin investing the proceeds from a groundbreaking new tax on large companies.

No other city in the U.S. has such a tax.

"It's a model for the rest of the nation," Mayor Ted Wheeler said recently. "A beacon and a testament to our community's belief in doing things a different way."



The Portland Clean Energy Community Benefits Fund, or PCEF, will raise as much as \$60 million a year from a new tax on big retailers. The money is supposed to supply clean, efficient energy and jobs to people the city has long slighted.

☰ The overarching goals: to provide members of underserved communities with valuable skills while insulating, caulking and tweaking inefficient heating and cooling systems, and installing rooftop solar panels at the homes of low-income Portlanders

# WILLAMETTE WE

The new tax, and the still-developing ideas for how to spend the money, signal a sea change in Portland politics.

At its core, the concept transfers wealth from big corporations such as Walmart to low-income Portlanders of color. It's a local version of the Green New Deal proposed in 2019 by U.S. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.). It's also part of a larger political effort to reshape who calls the shots—and who benefits—in America's whitest big city.

The new tax, created by a 2018 ballot initiative city voters passed by an overwhelming margin, is part of a power shift that saw two outsiders—Chloe Eudaly in 2016 and Jo Ann Hardesty in 2018—defeat establishment candidates for seats on the Portland City Council. The trend could continue this year with the probable election of the council's first Latinx commissioner: Carmen Rubio, executive director of the Latino Network.

It's long past time for Portland, a city with a history of institutionalized racism, to move aggressively toward equity, Hardesty and others say.

"Before PCEF, we had zero dollars dedicated to creating opportunities for folks who have been left out of the economic engine of the city of Portland," Hardesty said recently. "We're going to start creating some awesome opportunities for people in our community who could have never imagined them."

Never has City Hall had so much money to spend with so few strings attached. The guidelines for spending the tax are squishy, as are the yardsticks for measuring the effectiveness of those expenditures.

"One of the biggest tasks facing this effort is, what are the key metrics of success?" says David Heslam of Portland's Earth Advantage Institute, a supporter of the new tax. "They haven't communicated that yet."

That uncertainty concerns observers such as Maurice Rahming, an owner of O'Neill Electric, one of the city's largest African American-owned contracting firms.

"What are the accountability means they are going to use to track outcomes?" Rahming asks. "At the end of the day, it's about accountability and delivering on services."

Hardesty, the first black woman to serve on the City Council and the self-described "mother of the Portland Clean Energy Fund," promises she won't let it fail.

"I am the biggest champion of PCEF," Hardesty said recently, "and I stake my reputation on making sure it is implemented exactly as we envisioned."

≡ Last month, the City Council made some last-minute adjustments to the new tax, exempting some companies, including national waste haulers and construction firms, leaving large retailers such as Walmart, Target and Home Depot to pony up. WILLAMETTE WE

On Dec. 12, while considering those tweaks, the council got a warning from Oriana Magnera, a spokeswoman for the coalition that put the measure on the 2018 ballot.

"These exemptions take money out of the hands of black, indigenous and other communities of color and put it instead in the pockets of corporations," testified Magnera, who works for Verde, a social justice nonprofit active in passing the ballot measure and making preparations for deploying the money. "We will fight fiercely if any future erosion occurs."

Magnera and her fellow advocates face both an unparalleled opportunity and a daunting responsibility: to spend the new money transparently and well.

Across the nation, elected officials are looking for ways to help marginalized communities that also stand to bear the brunt of global warming. The fund could provide a road map for other cities—or it could end up a cautionary tale.

Robert McCullough, a Portland energy economist, says the fund faces two challenges: the declining effectiveness of energy efficiency measures, and the city's poor track record of fiscal prudence.

"It's shocking how much the world has changed in energy terms," McCullough says. "And the time has come for us to be very careful with our dollars—not something the city has done well."

For all the talk about how new and innovative the Portland Clean Energy Fund is, the fact remains that the city tried something similar before—and not that long ago.

The results could be a wake-up call for Hardesty, Magnera and other advocates.

The promise of energy efficiency is seductive: Insulate walls, caulk some leaks and tune up the heating system, and the savings on utility bills will exceed the costs of the work.

Such savings are a big part of the allure of the Clean Energy Fund. But recent history shows they can be difficult to capture.

If anybody could have made an energy efficiency nonprofit thrive in Portland, Tim Miller seemed to be that guy.

He had the pedigree: a degree in economics and industrial engineering and an MBA from Stanford; five years at Intel; and a couple of decades doing green energy consulting before he signed on in 2012 at a Portland outfit called Clean Energy Works.



Clad on a recent day in a blue Oxford cloth button-down and a Columbia Sportswear fleece vest, Miller, 54, explained that Clean Energy Works had its origins in then-Mayor Sam Adams' office in 2009, when the country was mired in recession.

# WILLAMETTE WE

Clean Energy Works snagged a \$20 million federal stimulus grant in 2010 and became an independent nonprofit whose mission was to deploy minority contractors to make 100,000 homes energy efficient.

"Our model was to retrofit," Miller says. "The idea was to create jobs now—and let's have them be good jobs."

The program aimed to benefit underserved communities—just as the new tax does. "From the beginning, equity advancement was a hallmark of the program—promoting worker diversity and career pathways into the energy sector, as well as development of contractors including minority- and women-owned firms," Clean Energy Works said in a grant application.

The similarities to the Portland Clean Energy Fund extended to granular details such as pay: Both programs specified workers should get no less than 1.8 times minimum wage.

"A lot of the participants in Clean Energy Works took that model and ran with it to create PCEF," says Rahming, who served on Clean Energy Works' board. "There are definitely similarities," Miller acknowledges.

Clean Energy Works conducted energy audits—and then, for a fee, referred homeowners to contractors for retrofits. "The feedback from the homeowners was almost universally positive," Miller says. "People said, 'We're more comfortable in homes and we save money on our bills.'"

But Clean Energy Works' services were expensive.

The Energy Trust of Oregon, a nonprofit funded by utility ratepayers, found the program's costs "significantly" higher than those of other contractors doing similar work without public funding.

Miller acknowledges Clean Energy Works was more expensive, but he says the nonprofit's holistic approach provided significant intangible benefits.

"What we were still working on is the health benefits of retrofitting," Miller explains. "If you do good air-sealing and are no longer dragging air up from a rat-infested crawl space, you can sit by the window now that it's sealed. You don't see those benefits when you see how many kilowatts you saved."

By 2014, Clean Energy Works had spent the \$20 million in federal stimulus money it received four years earlier. It then secured an additional \$10 million state grant to keep going.

But it could never generate significant revenues from its contractor referral service—and when the state grant ran out in 2016, tax records show, Clean Energy Works began recording large operating losses.

☰ "An energy efficiency-based program could not support itself," Miller says.

# WILLAMETTE WE

Although Clean Energy Works hoped to weatherize 100,000 homes, it only completed about 5,000.

Yet Miller judges the effort a success. "You got thousands of homes retrofitted, hundreds of jobs created, dozens of contractors, a ton of awareness," Miller says. "It was money well spent."

Adams, Portland's former mayor, served on Clean Energy Works' board. He says the work the nonprofit set out to do was much more expensive than expected. But he says it would be wrong to call the effort a failure.

"Clean Energy Works lasted a lot longer than other similar organizations across the country," Adams says, noting the nonprofit pioneered a method for financing retrofits that remains in use today. "We got one-time money, and when that ran out, there wasn't any more."

The lesson from Clean Energy Works' experience: Good intentions and an extensive background in the field were not enough to create an operation that could finance itself. What such a project needed instead was a spigot of money that couldn't be turned off when political goals changed.

So, two years ago, advocates set out to secure permanent funding.

In the sweltering summer of 2018, patrons exiting Powell's City of Books often encountered a signature gatherer, pushing a measure that would "ensure that the biggest corporations [pay a new tax] for climate resilience and wealth-building in low-income areas and communities of color."

That was a mouthful. The real question was: Did Portlanders want to tax Walmart?

They did. Voters approved the tax in November 2018 by a landslide, 65 to 35 percent. The result is a \$60 million annual pool of money.

One of the leading evangelists for spending that money is Magnera, 32, a bookish, intense Columbia University graduate.

Magnera cut her teeth in Oregon working on Measure 98, which funds dropout prevention for underserved students, and then worked for the NW Energy Coalition, advocating for solar energy.

A homeowner who identifies as white, Magnera is not in the target demographic for PCEF. But with her background and fearless demeanor, she's good at advocating for the groups that are.

"It all comes down to the idea of justice for the folks who are most impacted and harmed historically," she says, adding that the changes taking place in the halls of power and at the ballot box are "long overdue and not happening fast enough."

≡ Last year, Wheeler named Magnera to the Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission.

# WILLAMETTE WE

She shook up that influential, sometimes sleepy panel, demanding immediate action on issues ranging from exemptions for commercial and industrial property owners from the city's tree code (she opposed them) to requirements that private developers create space in new buildings to shelter the homeless (she favored them).

Magnera says she has a vision of what a favorable outcome for the Clean Energy Fund will look like.

"A number of successful projects that are supporting black, indigenous and other folks of color," she says. "Having lower energy bills, building resiliency and helping folks stay in their homes."

Over the past year, the city has set about translating such hopes into a framework that will put the new tax dollars to work.

Giving away \$60 million a year in grants is a challenging proposition. The Meyer Memorial Trust, for instance, has a full-time staff of 38 and gave away just \$36 million last year.

The Portland Arts Tax, which collects about \$11 million a year, distributes its money based on a per-student formula.

And PCEF differs from another specialty tax—the Portland Children's Levy and its \$20 million a year—in a key way: For the first 15 years of its existence, the Children's Levy required voter renewal every five years. There is no sunset mechanism for PCEF.

A nine-member citizen committee, staffed by a new office in the city's Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, will decide who gets the money.

The measure specifies that PCEF give money only to nonprofits. Groups such as Verde (Magnera's employer), OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon, and the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon, which were instrumental in passing the measure, are likely to apply for grants but are not represented on the board.

The measure otherwise gives the all-volunteer grant committee broad latitude. There are wide ranges delineating where the money should go—40 to 60 percent for renewable energy and energy efficiency, for instance—and buckets of money whose purpose is barely defined at all: Five percent, for example, is earmarked for "future innovation."

Unlike the retrofits Clean Energy Works did, PCEF's money can subsidize projects without meeting Oregon Public Utility Commission standards for financial return. That means low-income families can benefit from a direct subsidy. Grant recipients can simply pay for improvements that lower utility bills.

☰ On one hand, this relieves PCEF from the economic pressure Clean Energy Works faced. On the other hand, Portland economist Joe Cortright worries an absence of clear guidelines could make for a lack of accountability.

# WILLAMETTE WE

"There oftentimes isn't a lot of discipline on this kind of stuff," Cortright says. "The thinking is, if we wrap it in green enough cloth, nobody will look under the hood."

Rahming says he will be also watching closely to see whether PCEF money genuinely builds management skills for minority contractors and provides meaningful training for workers.

"It's not difficult to find an insulation company that meets minority goals, because most of those workers are minorities anyway," Rahming says. "But helping build a real contracting business that understands cash flow, bidding and scheduling, that's another thing entirely."

Hardesty says she's confident protections are in place to make sure the new tax money is properly spent and will produce genuine training and job skills for members of underserved communities. She notes that the fund prohibits self-dealing by board members, all deliberations on grant proposals will be public, all awards must be ratified by the City Council, and the program will be audited annually.

"There's no free money here," Hardesty says. "We're going to have really smart people staying very connected to this process."

Hardesty and the 200 organizations who backed the clean energy measure—as well as everybody who voted for it—had no idea how much money it would raise.

In campaign materials, including Voters' Pamphlet statements, proponents repeatedly said the measure would raise about \$30 million.

But after the measure passed, city officials ran their own numbers based on previous experience collecting taxes from large corporations. They concluded the take would be twice what the campaign expected.

Hardesty says the doubling of revenue projections came about because the campaign had no access to the city's corporate tax data (such information is confidential by law) and so harbored an incorrect understanding of which "retailers" the tax would hit.

"We did not know the definition of 'retail,'" she said recently. "Not until it passed did we find out it much broader than we anticipated."

Hardesty now has a strong incentive to make sure the tax succeeds. "There are a lot of eyes and ears from around the country on us," she says, noting that at least 15 jurisdictions have let Portland know they are interested in creating a similar tax.

☰ One place for PCEF to focus its efforts could be on the thousands of units of low-income housing scattered across the city. Unlike market-rate buildings, where landlords pass along utility costs to tenants and so have little motivation to weatherize, nonprofits that own subsidized housing have a big incentive to save money but often can't afford to.

WILLAMETTE WEEK

"That would set [PCEF] up for years of impactful work," says Earth Advantage's Heslam.

Phil Welker, retired executive director of Portland Energy Conservation Inc., which began working on efficiency 40 years ago, says he thinks Portland's new fund could do plenty of useful work, if it's judged on all the benefits it provides. That means including the health and climate benefits of weatherization, not just the financial savings on utility bills.

"In the old, utility model," Welker says, "any package of measures had to be cost effective at all times. But doing it that way, you miss out on dramatic opportunities."

He and Miller both see PCEF as a chance not just to save money for low-income Portlanders but to fulfill Portland's commitment to carbon reduction.

"Hopefully, there are the seeds of a new paradigm that will consider climate first and foremost," Miller says.

Both men say PCEF can thrive where the nonprofits they ran could not because the program won't be measured by the strict financial metrics that utility-funded projects are measured by. Instead, PCEF projects can focus more on less easily measured health and climate benefits.

Magnera says the fund's opportunity is even bigger.

"What we are seeing now is representation for communities that haven't been represented in our state and our city," she says. "Those doors are finally open."

*The nonprofit Journalism Fund for Willamette Week provided support for this story.*

### **Creating cost savings via energy efficiency looks easier than it is.**

Energy efficiency, always economically challenging in Oregon's mild climate, has grown more difficult to achieve as energy remains cheap—and therefore less worth conserving.

The experience of another once-celebrated Portland nonprofit focused on energy efficiency shows how the industry has changed.

Serious energy efficiency efforts emerged after OPEC shocked the world in the 1970s, driving fuel prices to historic heights.

☰ In 1979, a new nonprofit called Portland Energy Conservation Inc. spun off from the city of Portland's energy office. The nonprofit performed energy audits and weatherization retrofits, building up a national customer base.

# WILLAMETTE WE

By 2010, PECI employed 300 and even put its name in neon on the exterior of a downtown Portland high-rise, a bold move for an Oregon nonprofit. But PECI's revenue declined precipitously from 2011 to 2014, and that year the nonprofit sold its business to CLEAResult, a for-profit Texas company.

PECI executive director Phil Welker chose to bank the \$7 million in proceeds from that sale rather than stay in the energy efficiency business.

Welker has retired to Utah, replaced by Tim Miller, the former Clean Energy Works leader, whose task now is to give PECI's money away.

"The world has changed," Welker says. "Energy efficiency as a siloed, stand-alone activity is a solution for a problem that's kind of in the past."

## **How \$60 million a year will be distributed.**

**THE NEW TAX:** Big retailers, with revenues of more than \$500,000 in Portland and \$1 billion nationally, pay a 1 percent surcharge on their Portland sales. The city estimates the tax will raise \$44 million to \$61 million annually. The city keeps 5 percent for administration.

**WHO GIVES IT AWAY?** City commissioners each selected one member to serve on the grant committee; those five members then picked four more. The committee chooses which grants to award, and their recommendations must be ratified by the Portland City Council. Committee members may not direct money to their own organizations. (See list of committee members below.)

**WHO GETS THE MONEY?** Nonprofits, working alone or with partners. One-fifth of the money must go to groups with a history of working with "economically disadvantaged" Portlanders. All workers must be paid no less than 1.8 times minimum wage.

## **HOW WILL THE MONEY BE SPENT?**

Renewable energy and energy efficiency: 40 to 60 percent

Job training and contractor support: 20 to 25 percent

Renewable agriculture and green infrastructure: 10 to 15 percent

Future innovation: 5 percent

# WILLAMETTE WEEK

MEMBERS OF THE GRANT COMMITTEE: Shanie Brittany Clarke, Portland Public Schools; Faith Graham, Network for Energy, Water, and Health in Affordable Buildings; Andrea Hamberg, Multnomah County; Michael David Edden Hill, journeyman electrician; Megan Horst, Portland State University; Jeffrey Moreland Jr., general contractor; Maria Gabrielle Sipin, transportation planner; Ranfis Villatoro, BlueGreen Alliance; Robin Wang, Ascent Funding

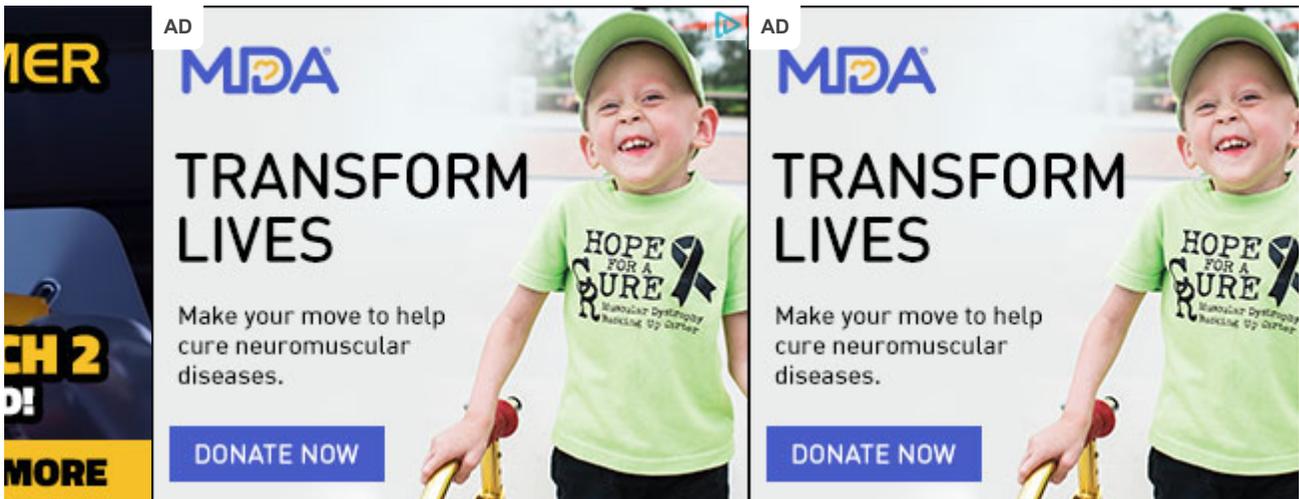
## Become a Friend of Willamette Week.

Help support local journalism that makes a difference.

Support Willamette Week.

TRENDING

### COMMENTS



#### Willamette Week Comment Policy

We expect users to engage productively, refrain from personal attacks and not use comments to promote themselves.



What do you think?

5 Responses



👍 Upvote
😂 Funny
❤️ Love

# WILLAMETTE WEEK

😮 Surprised
😡 Angry
😞 Sad

[Comments](#)
[Community](#)
1 Login

❤️ Recommend
🐦 Tweet
📌 Share
Sort by Best

Join the discussion...

LOG IN WITH

OR SIGN UP WITH DISQUS ?

Name

### Want more?

Subscribe to Willamette Week's newsletter to get the best of each issue delivered straight to your inbox.

✉ Enter email address

Subscribe

Hide this message



**Casey** • a day ago

"Although Clean Energy Works hoped to weatherize 100,000 homes, it only completed about 5,000.

Yet Miller judges the effort a success. "You got thousands of homes retrofitted, hundreds of jobs created, dozens of contractors, a ton of awareness," Miller says. "It was money well spent."

A failure by any objective measure, but claim victory anyway. This program will be no different and will serve to do little more than prop up organizations supportive of a few city councilors.

23 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Jim Kennedy** → Casey • a day ago

And that is why government should not be running such programs. It is pure corruption



15 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



reaaalistic → Casey • a day ago

*A failure by any objective measure, but claim victory anyway.*

Hey, Miller got paid.

The very definition of success.

6 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Zorg Zumo** • a day ago

Instant failure.

I can't believe I wasted 10 minutes of my life reading all those words that say - "We don't know what we are doing".

So sad to see such stupidity running the city.

21 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Doug Weadge** → Zorg Zumo • a day ago

And yet they will keep getting elected

7 ^ | v 1 • Reply • Share ›



**Jim** → Doug Weadge • 19 hours ago

As long as they have a 'D' after their name they will get elected. Look at all the winners now.

9 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Paul Gardner Allen** → Doug Weadge  
• 20 hours ago

I down voted you because there has to be a way to get these clowns out. Criminalize the voter fraud?

4 ^ | v 1 • Reply • Share ›



**Zorg Zumo** → Paul Gardner Allen  
• 17 hours ago

Raise the voting age to 35.

7 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**chargersfann** → Doug Weadge  
• 25 minutes ago

Of course yes cause Portland has the stupidest voters in America they won't vote no on anything.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

# WILLAMETTE WE



My Two Cents • a day ago • edited

Over the years politicians in Portland have done some really dumb things, but this tax, yes, another tax, has to be the dumbest. "The money is supposed to supply clean, efficient energy and jobs to people the city has long slighted." I'm a 63-year-old black man and I have a question for the Mayor and Council: when will all people, including the homeless and people of color, be held accountable for their own lives and the choices they make? Don't get me wrong, I'm all for helping those who truly try to help themselves; but this is nothing more than another handout and handouts do not help those with their hands out. In fact, I can make the argument that in some cases handouts make things worse for those in need.

"At its core, the concept transfers wealth from big corporations such as Walmart to low-income Portlanders of color." I was born in 1956, grew up in Tennessee, graduated from High School in 1974; and I can say without hesitation that as a young black man in Tennessee in the 70s, it was difficult to get any job. I was fortunate enough to have been taught that in order to make it in the world I had to get the best education possible, work harder, do the right things, and stay out of trouble. I'm happy to say that the blueprint for my life came from my mother, and I followed what she taught me and she was right.

No one should be allowed to live off of any type of government assistance their entire lives, unless they're disabled. The Mayor and Council are not doing people of color any favors with more handouts. The best helping hands are the ones at the end of our own arms. Sorry my post is so long.

31 ^ | v 1 • Reply • Share ›



NorthernLight → My Two Cents • 13 hours ago

Have you realized how white leftists think that black people are stupid?

They think that black people--colored/of color as they like to call them--cannot do anything without the benevolent white people making special accommodations for them after telling them what their excuses are.

some of this money will be used to give to 'colored/poc' solely based upon that--their color--not whether they are adent, experienced, educated

# WILLAMETTE WE



not whether they are adept, experienced, educated, skilled, or even willing to run a contracting business, much less one in the absurd "green energy sector" that purchasers don't get any payback from.

And their work will be done on rentals, unless in portland there are all these colored/poc that got a mortgage and own their homes. So what does that mean? The money will be going to businesses/landowners/corporations.

times change, white leftists don't

6 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Zorg Zumo** → My Two Cents • 18 hours ago

Your post was just right - thanks for contributing!

4 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Scotty99** → My Two Cents • 13 hours ago

Sir, please run for mayor.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Terence Flanagan** → My Two Cents • 4 hours ago

How do you "identify as white"? AOC idea, run by Hardesty.....lol. bye bye millions

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**reaalistx** • a day ago • edited

*At its core, the concept transfers wealth from big corporations such as Walmart to low-income Portlanders of color.*

LOL. Yeah, right. You seriously think that *Walmart* is going to ultimately pay this tax?

This is nothing more than a thinly disguised sales tax, all of which will be paid by ordinary Portlanders.

31 ^ | v 1 • Reply • Share ›



**Zorg Zumo** → reaalistx • 18 hours ago

Exactly right. A person has to be very "special" to believe that corporations are dumb enough not to pass the cost onto consumers.

This is what our 3rd world education system gets us.

10 ^ | v 1 • Reply • Share ›

WILLAMETTE WE



reaalistx • a day ago

What's the Plan?

# WILLAMETTE WE

To transfer money from taxpayers to politically connected individuals and groups, of course.

A lot of governmental programs in Portland are like that.

19 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**ILoveClimateChange** → reaalistx • a day ago

UN IPCC Official Admits 'We Redistribute World's Wealth By Climate Policy'

(OTTMAR EDENHOFER, UN IPCC OFFICIAL)

Basically it's a big mistake to discuss climate policy separately from the major themes of globalization. The climate summit in Cancun at the end of the month is not a climate conference, but one of the largest economic conferences since the Second World War.

(NZZ): De facto, this means an expropriation of the countries with natural resources. This leads to a very different development from that which has been triggered by development policy.

(EDENHOFER): First of all, developed countries have basically expropriated the atmosphere of the world community

[see more](#)

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**That Guy** • a day ago • edited

When I moved here I purposely avoided buying inside the city limits. Nothing that has happened since has caused me to regret.

17 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Portland Native** • a day ago

Socialists/communists couldn't care less about the environment. They simply use our concern for it as a tool to justify growing government and their power/control over our lives believing you are too stupid to run your own life as the founding fathers envisioned. If they have you convinced that man caused CO2 is going to destroy earth and kill you in just a few years (Although CO2 is really the miracle molecule of life, more of it creates a wetter,



greener world and without it all life really would die.) why wouldn't you give them more power and control. After all, what good is the Bill of Rights if your dead? The real socialist/communist countries like China (Scandinavian countries are not socialist they have a free market economy) pollute the most and get a pass from leftists all the time. Start looking at the world and history as it really is and thinking for your self.

# WILLAMETTE WE

24 ^ | v 1 • Reply • Share ›



**SillyWolf** → Portland Native • a day ago

Portland voted out Democrazy when they voted in Socialism. Now, whatever, no voting necessary just dictates from Central Committee.

15 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Kevin Smith** → Portland Native • a day ago

"To each according to their need" ...the stinking carcass of marxism exhumed as "social justice".

10 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**reaalistx** • a day ago

*Never has City Hall had so much money to spend with so few strings attached. The guidelines for spending the tax are squishy, as are the yardsticks for measuring the effectiveness of those expenditures. Never has City Hall had so much money to spend with so few strings attached. The guidelines for spending the tax are squishy, as are the yardsticks for measuring the effectiveness of those expenditures.*

LOL. A completely unregulated city slush fund.

Buy popcorn - you won't believe who will end up with the money.

23 ^ | v 1 • Reply • Share ›



**NorthernLight** → reaaalistx • 13 hours ago

and the brains of the group is someone that got a BA from colombia in Women's and Gender Studies and Comparative Ethnic Studies from Columbia University. lmao!

someone that had to take actual science classes it failed for last time this farce was tried, so now the leftists dove deep into the people that have studied the nether regions of people and melanin content.



What could go wrong? Oh well, not their money anyway.  
never is with leftists

# WILLAMETTE WE

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Jim Kennedy** → NorthernLight  
• 10 hours ago

If a course of classes has to tell you it is a "study" or "studies" then it is not an academic course. Just like if the package says "processed cheese food" means it is not cheese or food.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Fred and Joan Booth** • a day ago

As a building owner we strongly disagree with the premise that landlords in the private rental market have no incentive to insulate or upgrade energy efficiency. Long, long ago we replaced single pane aluminum windows and insulated the walls of our building so as to attract better quality of tenants with families that wanted a quiet apt. to live in. The double pane windows combined with the insulation make for very quiet and comfortable living spaces. Our tenants appreciating the upgrades stay in our building for years. Sometimes until their passing. We also have upgraded the appliances which many building operators don't think of when doing upgrades. Despite our not being responsible for the PGE bills we appreciate the fact that solid top ranges are more efficient and take much less maintaining work for us in the long run as well as being easier for our tenants to clean too.

15 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Jorge Carolinos** → Fred and Joan Booth  
• 20 hours ago

The more time and energy spent on upgrades the less efficient the time and money spent. It sounds like you did things right. The first 100 bucks improves things vastly more than the last 100.

Walking around the house recaulking the wood windows and making them fit better one afternoon is going to do more than most anything.

Replacing with quality double pane windows is also money well spent.

I don't see this group pulling this off well



I don't see this group pulling this off well, government administration types running what is essentially quality handyman work.

7 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

# WILLAMETTE WE



**SillyWolf** → Fred and Joan Booth • a day ago

I bet if you plaster solar panels all over your building, you'd have cool factor going on.

6 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**WeirdIsntWorking** → SillyWolf

• 18 hours ago

Until you have to replace your roof. Then part of your solar savings will be paid to the roofer when they have to detach and re-install them.

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Fred and Joan Booth** → SillyWolf

• 14 hours ago

We have thought of doing just that for our farm and rental property but the high installation cost doe not justify the 30+ year return on investment.It was better just to make our buildings as efficient as possible. Plus they wanted to cut down all of our leaf and fruit bearing trees too! Our tenants like the apple and cherry trees for making fruit desserts with.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**John Retzlaff** • a day ago

"from a new tax on big retailers" that is being passed on to consumers, and is basically a sales tax.

22 ^ | v 1 • Reply • Share ›



**ILoveClimateChange** → John Retzlaff • a day ago

yup!

5 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Ziggy Ratsnest** • 21 hours ago

Maybe the reason Portland is one of the whitest cities in America is that very few non-white people want to live under a marxist nanny state.

14 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Jim Kennedy** → Ziggy Ratsnest • 10 hours ago



So you are saying those POC are smarter than the average Portland native?

^ | v · Reply · Share ›

# WILLAMETTE WE



**Nick** • 21 hours ago

Magnera has a bachelor's degree in gender and women's studies (not joking) and no other education to speak of, yet this is the person we keep hearing from in the news peddling ridiculous 'woke' propositions for the entire city. She is clearly trying to win the 'woke' olympics, which in Portland, typically gets you elected to city council.

13 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Zorg Zumo** → Nick • 20 hours ago

Yes, lesbian dance theory prepares a person for public office.

6 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**SillyWolf** → Nick • 21 hours ago

Oh my word..lol

5 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Jim Kennedy** → Nick • 10 hours ago

In other words they know nothing except how to say how oppressed they are

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**dkgiovenco** ✓ Deplorable • 21 hours ago

Hello this is Portland. How may I tax you today?

12 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**three rotten branches** • 17 hours ago

Holy smokes, with Hardesty and Chloe leading the way, what possibly could go wrong?

60 million of white guilt money given away to minorities annually. With very little oversight. Could I go blackface and get some new solar panels?

11 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Soapbox310** • a day ago • edited

DO VOTERS REALLY BELIEVE THIS, Somebody will go to jail.

"WHO GETS THE MONEY? Nonprofits, working alone or with partners.

One-fifth of the money must go to groups with a history [Judged by whol of working with "economically



judged by who] or working with "economically disadvantaged" Portlanders [defined by who]. All workers must be paid no less than 1.8 times minimum wage."

# WILLAMETTE WE

11 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Anthony Thurmond** → Soapbox310 • a day ago

The problem with this proposal, as with many government sponsored programs, is that there will be no accountability. These non-profits will get their money by saying "Yes, we will help people of color weatherize their homes to be more efficient." They'll get their \$ from PDX, and that will be the end of it. Is the city, with their skeleton crew of program managers, going to be able to oversee the work of an unknown amount of non-profits & their partners? Doubtful, but it will probably make a handful of people feel good about themselves for providing the illusion that they're helping the less fortunate.

6 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

AD

**CONQUER YOUR DEBT**

NAVY FEDERAL Credit Union  
Get a 1.99% intro APR on balance transfers and purchases for 1 year.  
Insured by NCUA.

AD

**VIDEOGAMER**

**NEW OVERWATCH 2 DETAILS REVEALED!**

**CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE**

## Get Portland stories straight to your inbox.

We'll send you a newsletter with what you need to know every week.

[Subscribe](#)

# WILLAMETTE WE