



To: Members of the House Committee on Energy and Environment
From: Rhett Lawrence, Pacific Northwest Policy Manager
Date: February 4, 2020
RE: House Bill 4135

Chair Power and Members of the Committee:

My name is Rhett Lawrence and I am the Pacific Northwest Policy Manager for Forth. We are a nonprofit trade association that advocates for the advancement of electric, hydrogen, shared, smart, connected, and autonomous mobility. I am here today on behalf of our more than 160 members - including auto manufacturers, electric vehicle charging suppliers, industry partners, utilities, local governments, and non-profit environmental organizations - to urge your support for House Bill 4135.

As you know, Oregon has ambitious greenhouse gas reduction goals and we are already behind in meeting them. Given that the transportation sector is now the state's largest source of greenhouse gas emissions, it is critical that we take immediate and significant steps to reduce our transportation emissions. The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) recommends in its Statewide Transportation Strategy that 95% of Oregon's vehicles be electric, plug-in hybrids, or hybrids by 2050 in order to achieve our emissions reduction goals. Electric and hybrid vehicles currently make up less than 5% of registered vehicles in Oregon, and ODOT projects that on our current trajectory, they will only account for 24% of all vehicles by 2050.

Climate is not the only reason to care about electrifying transportation. Transportation is the second-highest expense for most households, second only to housing, and electric vehicles and other new mobility services can dramatically reduce those costs. Using cheap, clean Northwest electricity to fuel a car is roughly equivalent to buying gasoline for \$1 per gallon. Owning and operating EVs can allow people to keep more of their own money in their pockets and become more self-sufficient.

For these reasons, Forth is very supportive of any policy proposals which would speed up the rate of EV adoption in Oregon, and we believe that HB 4135 could do just that. Indeed, we were strongly supportive of the original introduced bill, which would have required both Investor-Owned Utilities (IOUs) and Consumer-Owned Utilities (COUs) to invest one percent of their revenues in transportation electrification (TE). The -1 version of the bill does not require COUs to invest any portion of their revenues in TE, thus depriving areas of the state outside of IOU territory of much needed investments in EV charging infrastructure. However, we recognize that the legislative process is often about compromise, and we see that even this scaled-back version of the bill can have real benefits for expanding transportation electrification.

Requiring that all utilities – both IOUs and COUs – invest revenues generated from the Clean Fuels Program into transportation electrification will result in substantial new investments in the policies we need in Oregon. We also appreciate the flexibility built into the bill that will allow individual utilities to make those investments in the ways that are most appropriate for their service territories. Similarly, the bill’s requirement that IOUs invest half a percent of their revenues in TE will provide significant funding for critical EV infrastructure. The primary IOUs are either well on their way to that investment benchmark or have already passed it, but we appreciate seeing those investments codified in HB 4135. We also understand and are comfortable with the reasons Idaho Power is not covered by the provisions of the bill.

In sum, we believe that House Bill 4135 will help get Oregon on the necessary path to markedly increasing transportation electrification. Forth strongly supports this bill and we urge Committee members to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony and I’m happy to answer any questions you may have.

FORTH Empowering Mobility

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