

Chair Marsh, Vice-Chair Helm, Vice-Chair Brock Smith, and Members of the House Committee on Energy & Environment,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 2021, 100% Clean Energy for All. My name is James Freeman, I am a recent college grad and moved to Portland Oregon of last year to take a job as a Mechanical Engineer in the Wind Energy industry. I chose to apply my degree towards a career in Renewable Energy because Global Warming is unquestionably the most serious threat to humanity and I don't believe we're doing anywhere near enough to address it. The wildfires this year were absolutely horrifying due to the destruction they caused and the health impacts that will result from them. I am worried sick for my parents, who have gone through several terrible wildfire seasons and I am so terrified that the smoke they've been subject to will cause them health issues, or even lung cancer. Scientists have found climate change to be the main driver of the extreme weather events of the last decade (including wildfires), and the only way we can reduce the impact of these environmental catastrophes is to reduce the amount of carbon we emit each year to net zero. The first step in this path will be to decarbonize our Energy infrastructure, and House Bill 2021 is a phenomenal bill, which will put Oregon on the right track to protecting the planet and the futures of the next generation

In addition, my job allows me to see the benefits of the Clean Energy industry firsthand in communities across Oregon and the country. Not only does Wind Energy provide cheap and clean energy, but it also provides jobs and funding for rural communities. Every Wind Farm we operate provides thousands of dollars to individual farmers and landowners each year along with millions of additional tax revenue for the counties they sit in. I met the wife of a farmer during one of my trips to the field and she spoke about how the additional income they provide help her business. In addition, I've met countless Technicians and plant staff who perform extremely skilled work maintaining our turbines. These workers have stable and well-paying jobs with opportunities for advancement that would not exist in these rural areas if not for the Wind industry's development in Oregon. This bill would encourage additional clean energy projects to be pursued in Oregon, with strong labor standards to ensure these jobs are local and provide a good salary and benefits.

I also believe that the incentives for community-based energy projects such as solar plus storage are incredibly important to our energy future. We saw as recently as February the widespread outages caused from extreme weather events. Me and many of my neighbors lost power for anywhere from an hour to a few days. Having local solutions such as batteries and storage will make households able to continue operating even if there is a large scale grid issue, and these households could also provide support to the grid in the case of a drop in generation or fallen transmission lines. These projects will also create jobs and business for local installation businesses, whereas many large scale projects can only be undertaken by large established energy companies.

For these reasons, I urge you to support House Bill 2021 so that Oregon communities are sure to benefit from the transition to clean energy. So many communities in Oregon are struggling right now from the pandemic and its economic impacts, extreme weather events, and wildfires and we have the opportunity to help these communities with all the benefits that clean energy provides.

Thank you for your time and for this opportunity to testify in support of this bill. Please support a strong 100% Clean Energy Standard with good jobs and community-based energy projects for Oregonians.

Sincerely,
James Freeman, Portland, OR