



Office of Sustainability

April 5, 2021

Representative Pam Marsh, Chair  
House Committee on Energy and Environment  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court Street NE, Room D  
Salem, OR 97301

**Re: The Multnomah County Office of Sustainability supports the -5 amendment to HB 2021**

Chair Marsh and Members of the Committee:

The Multnomah County Office of Sustainability asks for your support for the -5 amendment to HB 2021. The -5 amendment creates a path to a just and equitable transition to 100% clean electricity for Oregonians and prioritizes community benefits, family-wage jobs, workforce equity, and resiliency. We need to clean our electricity supply. We also need the investments and opportunities that this just transition would create, especially now that many of Oregon's already vulnerable communities are living through, while trying to recover from, the impacts of COVID-19, the wildfires, and of other events in the last year. The uprising against anti-Blackness and other forms of racism also highlighted the need for policy that centers racial justice.

The -5 amendment is critical as Multnomah County works to transition to a clean and resilient energy system while centering environmental and energy justice. In 2017, we set two renewable energy goals: 1) meeting 100% of our community-wide electricity needs with renewables by 2035, and 2) meeting 100% of our community-wide energy needs with renewables by 2050.<sup>1</sup> Our transition must prioritize community benefits and partnerships with our environmental justice communities.<sup>2</sup> It seems unlikely that we can meet our goals under current policy.

In addition to setting an achievable 100% clean electricity standard with living-wage jobs and workforce equity opportunities, the -5 amendment would allow communities like Multnomah County to meet clean and renewable energy goals more ambitious than the statewide target. The legislation enables community-supported renewables programs. Under these programs, we would be able to ensure that Multnomah County can meet our renewable energy goals and that this transition to clean electricity results in opportunities for economic, social, and environmental benefits for our environmental justice communities. Those opportunities will be key to a stronger and more resilient Multnomah County.

To close, we see the process that led to the -5 amendment to HB 2021 as a model for developing strong energy policy in the future. The -5 amendment is the result of a process that included a wide variety of

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<sup>1</sup> Multnomah County Board of Commissioners, Resolution 2017-046 at 3 (Jun. 1, 2017), <https://multco.us/file/63311/download>.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.* at 3-4.

stakeholders and that, importantly, sought to center the voices of the frontline-community leaders that worked hard to bring 100% Clean Energy for All within reach. Thanks to that process and to that leadership, the -5 amendment to HB 2021 would clean our electricity system and create community and workforce benefits, including for communities traditionally burdened with the externalities of our energy system and excluded from its benefits.

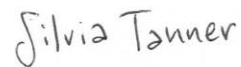
For the reasons outlined above, the Multnomah County Office of Sustainability enthusiastically supports the -5 amendment to HB 2021. We look forward to continuing to engage in realizing the promise of 100% Clean Energy for All.

We appreciate your consideration of these comments and ask for your support for the -5 amendment to HB 2021 and for a just transition to 100% clean electricity.

Sincerely,



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