

April 6, 2021

House Committee on Energy and Environment

Testimony on HB 2021: 100% Clean Energy

Submitted by: Amelia Porterfield, Senior Policy Advisor

---

Chair Marsh, Vice-Chairs Helm and Brock Smith and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to add The Nature Conservancy's voice in support of HB 2021 and 100% Clean Energy for Oregon.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is a science-based, non-partisan organization committed to conserving the lands and waters on which all life depends. In Oregon, TNC has over 80,000 supporters and members in every county. Based in communities around the state, we manage lands and waters in varied ecosystems and partner with ranchers, farmers, fishers, timber and environmental interests on some of the most challenging conservation issues facing people and nature.

Climate change and biodiversity are two of the most critical challenges of our time. Over the past few years alone, our state has faced extreme weather events that have wreaked havoc on entire communities, damaged treasured natural areas, and harmed state and local economies. Working families, including farmers, farmworkers, and those who are dependent on natural resources economies suffer the greatest hardship. This is especially true for Black, Indigenous and other People of Color communities, low income families and individuals experiencing homelessness, who are the most severely impacted by climate-related incidents. Oregon must take swift action to address the climate crisis by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The Nature Conservancy strongly supports passing a 100% Clean Energy Bill in the 2021 session that supports frontline communities and ensures Oregon will meet its emissions goals.

As a science-based organization, TNC consistently advocates for policies that target a temperature increase of under 1.5 degrees Celsius. Research shows this threshold is achievable with bold, meaningful action. Oregon has made important strides in recent years, including Coal to Clean and Clean Fuels, which have moved our state in the right direction, but a gap remains in our energy sector. A 100% Clean Energy policy would help Oregon meet its emissions targets by shifting our energy mix from fossil fuel reliance to being powered entirely by affordable, non-polluting sources like solar, wind, and innovative energy storage technologies by the year 2040. In doing so, this policy would create jobs, bolster our local energy economy and spare frontline communities from the continuing damage from fossil fuel transport.

In states around the country, The Nature Conservancy has supported the 100% Clean policy approach, which has been tested and proved an effective way to reduce fossil fuel emissions. Eight states, including our neighbors to the north and south, have already adopted a 100% Clean policy and are well on their way to meeting these attainable emissions reduction goals. As the committee works to refine the bill, it is our hope that the implementation of HB 2021 supports opportunities for frontline communities while ensuring consistent and reliable emissions reductions from our energy sector.

We thank the committee for its collaborative approach and attention to this urgent priority.