

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 HB 2021, which will promote 100% clean energy for Oregon. I specifically want to express my support of the -5 amendment. I am a scientist, and I have paid close attention to the mounting evidence that climate change is, indeed, an existential threat to future healthy human lives. To ensure thriving in the future, we need to transition off of fossil fuels, and moving towards a 100% clean energy grid is an essential part of how we stop climate change.

This bill is a great example of how to support a just transition to the new fossil-fuel-free economy. The bill includes :

-Strong labor standards that ensure clean energy projects hire local, pay the prevailing wage and provide good benefits, and reserve opportunities for apprenticeships.

-Incentives for community-based energy projects such as solar plus storage that increase energy independence, affordability, and disaster-resilience.

-Provisions that prioritize benefits and avoid harms to environmental justice communities including BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color), low-income communities, Tribes, and rural and coastal communities.

All of these are necessary components to ensure that our transition to clean energy does not leave vulnerable Oregonians behind.

I also want to highlight the fact that biomass should not be included as a clean energy source. The immediate greenhouse gas impacts of burning wood to generate power actually exacerbate global warming. The carbon capture by re-growing trees takes at least 40 years, and we do not have the time to weather 40 years of increased CO2 in the meantime.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Felice Kelly