



May 13, 2021

Representative Nancy Nathanson, Chair
House Committee on Revenue
Oregon Legislature

Re: Environment Oregon supports House Bill 2021

Chair Nathanson and Members of the Committee,

Environment Oregon is a statewide, member-based environmental advocacy organization working for clean air, clean water and open space. We have tens of thousands of members across the state, and we are writing in support of House Bill 2021, 100% Clean Energy for Oregon.

Powering Oregon with 100% clean energy will allow us to cut carbon emissions in line with our climate action goals, clean up our air, and protect Oregonians' health. We have the ability to harness clean, abundant energy from the sun and wind more efficiently -- and cheaply -- than ever before, tapping into power that doesn't pollute or make us sick. Unfortunately, Oregon still produces and consumes much of our state's energy from fossil fuels. We can have healthier communities right now, and a livable future for generations to come—but to get there, we need to transform the way we produce and consume energy. Multiple states across the country have already made similar commitments to 100% clean energy, putting themselves on a path to a cleaner and brighter future. Oregon should join them.

One critical part of any meaningful commitment to 100% clean energy is the inclusion of aggressive interim targets for the state and electricity providers to hit along the way to the end goal of 100% clean. HB2021 requires Oregon's major utilities to supply customers with 100% clean energy by 2040, with interim targets of 80% clean energy by 2030 and 90% clean energy by 2035. The bill's requirement that large retail electricity companies submit clean energy plans to the state's Public Utilities Commission works well in conjunction with existing procurement and planning processes and will help ensure that the interim targets are being met.

Environment Oregon also supports HB2021's prohibition on new or expanded natural gas power plants, cutting off the development of any additional polluting natural gas facilities and pointing utilities and power providers towards the truly renewable wind and solar facilities that will actually get us to 100% clean energy.

Renewable energy can be transformative for individual communities, cities and towns, allowing them to reap the benefits of cleaner air, clean energy, and economic development. To make sure that individual communities have the resources to build wind and solar projects in their own backyards, the bill includes convening a workgroup to ensure that the transition to 100% clean energy is bringing real community benefits and establishes a \$50 million Community Renewable Investment Fund to fund renewable energy and storage systems. We believe these are effective and important steps for ensuring that all Oregon communities get the benefits of the clean energy transition.

After years of halting inaction on climate change in the state legislature, 100% Clean Energy for Oregon provides a crucial opportunity for the state to move forward on building a clean energy future and addressing the climate crisis. The wildfires that swept across Oregon's forests, devastated families and communities, and darkened our skies last fall are a potent and poignant reminder of the urgency of climate action.

It's time for Oregon to commit to 100% clean energy, and Oregon deserves a 100% commitment that meets the scale of the environmental challenges we face, focuses on truly clean and renewable energy sources, and benefits Oregon communities. We urge you to pass House Bill 2021.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Celeste Meiffren-Swango
State Director, Environment Oregon