

**Testimony of Metro Council President Lynn Peterson  
In Support of House Bill 4141  
Joint Committee on Transportation  
February 10, 2022**



Metro is the elected regional government that serves nearly 1.7 million people in the 24 cities and three counties of the Portland metropolitan area. We provide a broad range of public services that includes land use and transportation planning, solid waste and recycling operations, housing and homeless services, management of parks and natural areas, and operation of major visitor facilities like the Oregon Convention Center and the Oregon Zoo.

Metro supports House Bill 4141 because switching to renewable diesel is an easy yet impactful climate win. Renewable diesel produces 60-80% less greenhouse gas emissions per gallon than petroleum diesel. It also burns cleaner than petroleum diesel which means less air pollution and lower maintenance costs. And it's easy to make the switch: as a drop in fuel, it can immediately be used to replace petroleum diesel without any changes to engines or operations.

Metro switched to renewable diesel in August 2020 for trucking the region's waste to the landfill in Arlington. We wanted to make the switch to renewable diesel years ago but supply and cost were barriers. Once we found a guaranteed supply, it was easy to make the switch; no changes to engines or equipment were needed. And due to this fuel's superior performance, the past couple winters we did not need to add fuel additives for winterizing, saving on some typical costs. We have since then switched to renewable diesel in most of the rest of our operations including at our parks and at the Oregon Zoo. Our zoo train, a fond childhood memory for so many Oregon children, now operates with renewable diesel. We are thrilled to provide this formative experience with the knowledge that we have significantly reduced black carbon and particulate matter to help protect their young lungs.

This switch was the single most impactful climate action that Metro could take to reduce emissions from our internal operations. Just moving from petroleum diesel to renewable diesel in the trucks moving garbage to the landfill reduced those trucking emissions by at least 65%, and cut Metro's overall emissions by 20%.

While supply may wane on occasion, we always know that petroleum diesel would be an easy pivot if needed. Our goal is to lower greenhouse gas emissions as much as possible and renewable diesel is that ready replacement that helps us meet our climate goals today, without waiting for tomorrow. To date, I am happy to report that we have not needed to backstop with petroleum diesel once.

Switching to renewable diesel also instantly improves air quality by reducing toxic diesel particulate matter, black carbon, and other pollutants. The Portland Metro region has some of the highest levels of diesel pollution in the country. In some areas, like near transportation corridors, levels of diesel pollution are over ten times higher than Oregon health benchmarks. This pollution has a disproportionate impact on BIPOC communities, putting them at greater

risk of disease and death. Not only is diesel exhaust deadly on its own, it also increases the risk of death from COVID-19, which is already higher for BIPOC communities. Oregon DEQ estimates that over \$1.6 billion is spent every year on avoidable health related costs from diesel emissions exposure such as illness, hospitalization, lost work days, and even premature death.

Metro urges a yes vote on HB 4141. Switching to renewable diesel is simple, easy and immediately reduces greenhouse gas emissions and improves air quality. Regulation that prioritizes the use of renewable diesel sends a strong market signal to renewable diesel suppliers that Oregon is committed to a clean energy future. That signal will help our state grow future renewable diesel production and supply, secure Oregon's clean fuels market, and drive down regional and state emissions.