

To: House Committee on Climate Energy and Environment
Re: Support SB 685 Hydrogen Blending Oversight & Public Notice
Date: February 9, 2025

Greetings Chair Lively, Vice-Chair Gamba, Vice-Chair Levy, and Members of the Committee,

I am Dr. Theodora Tsongas, testifying today in support of SB 685. I am an environmental health scientist with a career in public health. I am concerned that Oregon's current regulatory framework lacks any oversight over blending hydrogen into 'natural' gas pipelines, putting the public's health, safety, and financial well-being at risk without the knowledge of residents or ratepayers. For example, no advance public notice was given when NW Natural recently added hydrogen to gas supplies in SE Portland, forcing residents to participate in an experimental study without their consent, something that is patently unethical. Furthermore, when asked at a public meeting about the extent of the distribution of the mixture of 'natural gas' and hydrogen in the system, what addresses were included, NW Natural's representative would not answer the question. It is specifically because of this lack of transparency that it is imperative that we have hydrogen blending oversight and public notice, so that people can be aware of and take measures to reduce their risks and that of their businesses and families if or when possible. Public utilities must be made to be transparent as residents and ratepayers have little choice of utility providers. Please support and pass SB 685. Thank you for your time and attention.