

Submitter: John Perona

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB685

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of this bill. I am Professor of Chemistry (Emeritus) at Portland State University and author of the climate science book "From Knowledge to Power" (Ooligan Press, 2021), which is widely circulated in Oregon.

I write in support of this common-sense bill, which does no more than require gas utilities to notify state regulators when they blend hydrogen into the natural gas supply, for delivery to customers. Surely, Oregon residents have a right to know what is in the product that they are spending their hard-earned money on. It seems incredible that such a basic notion could possibly be contested.

The information that is required in the notice is completely straightforward for a gas utility to provide, and is crucial for customers and regulators to know about. Certainly safety concerns are obviously important. Can gas utilities seriously argue that they should have the right to blend leak-prone, flammable substances into customers' gas lines without even telling them first?

Hydrogen will have many beneficial roles in the clean energy economy - especially in providing heat for manufacturing, as a precursor compound for synthesis of specialty chemicals and fertilizers, and in some modes of transportation. But it is really not needed in residences or businesses, because all potential applications in those settings are more efficiently and inexpensively provided by electricity. The superiority of electricity in residences and commercial buildings is copiously documented in the scientific literature.

If gas utilities nonetheless want to blend hydrogen (however it is synthesized) with their natural gas, for the interim period in which we still need natural gas - well, this bill absolutely does not prohibit them from doing that. Again, it merely requires notice.