



February 26, 2025

Senate Committee on Judiciary
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Food Northwest Strongly Opposes Senate Bill 680 – Relating to environmental marketing claims.

Dear Committee Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher, and Members of Committee:

Food Northwest is the 110-year-old trade association for food companies in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. Food Northwest has member companies producing food products across the state. These companies include locally- and family-owned businesses, farmer-owned cooperatives, and locally-founded publicly traded enterprises. They produce food for the world using Oregon's environmental ethic and hard work.

Oregon food companies have invested in sustainable and environmentally friendly practices. It is what can set our companies apart from the competition. We should be proud of these efforts and share those with consumers without fear of frivolous lawsuits or claims. Instead, if passed, SB 680 will disincentive publicizing sustainability and environmental practices around topics like energy use, greenhouse gas emissions, water use, and other important areas.

Part of the Oregon brand is commitment to sustainability and environment benefits. This bill would have a chilling effect on this branding, undermining generations of work by all kinds of businesses, agencies, and NGOs and hurting Oregon businesses in the marketplace. This bill will not help Oregon businesses, consumers, or the environment.

Deceptive advertising is already illegal in Oregon and subject to the Unlawful Trade Practices Act. But this bill is much broader than deceptive advertising. It includes any communication a business makes in connection with selling a product or service as well as "reputational advertising." It would cover logos, symbols and even brand names. The term "positive public perception" is undefined and another legal land mine for good Oregon companies. The breadth and depth of ways a company could violate the provisions of this bill are so extensive that any company suggesting an environmental benefit would face potential violations.

Oregon food and beverage businesses of all types will have new exposure to liability even if they've done or said nothing wrong and in fact, even those that have done the right thing. Join us in opposing SB 680. It's unnecessary and harmful to Oregon's local businesses.