



**Community Renewable Energy  
Association**

James Williams - Executive Director

[jwilliams@crearenewables.org](mailto:jwilliams@crearenewables.org)

541.410.8075

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**To:** *House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment*

**Subject:** **CREA Testimony in support of HB 2063**

Honorable Chair Lively, Vice-Chair Gamba, Vice-Chair Bobby Levy, and members of the committee:

I am writing in support of HB 2063 on behalf of CREA, an intergovernmental entity representing local governments and developers of renewable energy facilities in Oregon since 2007.

HB 2063 would create a task force to study and report on energy production on farmland, also known as agrivoltaics.

CREA supports Oregon-grown energy, while recognizing the importance of the preservation of high valued resource lands, and balancing that with strong support for land-owner property rights. Agrivoltaics can be that balance. Agrivoltaics provides the opportunity to develop renewable energy locally while maintaining the agricultural use of the land (or portion thereof).

The examples exist, and research around agrivoltaics shows a reduction in evapotranspiration rates, water/moisture retention for crops, especially in dryer, more arid climates. Less stress on plant life and crops, as well as for sheep and livestock when used to graze the flora beneath the panels. There are ample benefits, including an allowance for the farmer to innovate and diversify farming operations, and ultimately make better use of the land and farm. For these reasons, CREA supports agrivoltaics, and the innovative opportunities and benefits it presents to the American Farmer.

While CREA supports agrivoltaics generally, we have some concerns about the bill:

1. We want to make sure whatever work is done does not result in an even more cumbersome/regulated outcome for siting solar.
2. We have concerns that this work would be managed by DLCD, and would prefer to see ODOE or an alternative agency be the lead and want to ensure this is just a study and not a rulemaking.
3. The outcomes of the study should be adjusted to ensure that it also looks at the practical application of agrivoltaics and how they would fit into Oregon's energy systems and regulations more broadly.
4. If a Task Force is created, then the objective must be simple and clear, and not lead to yet another multi-year long process, more regulation and no additional agrivoltaics opportunities for farmers.

In closing, CREA supports having the conversation, but we believe that the answers to the questions around benefits of agrivoltaics are already out there, along with exciting examples right here in Oregon. Please note CREA is working on two other bills to study avoided costs and small-scale renewable costs that we believe be useful investments to gain critical information for long term planning of our energy systems.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter, and we hope the committee will make some amendments then move this concept moving forward.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James Williams". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "W".

James Williams  
CREA Executive Director

*CREA is an ORS 190 intergovernmental association. Members include counties, irrigation districts, project developers, for-profit businesses and non-profit organizations. CREA supports business and economic opportunities through renewable energy development in a competitive environment. We support use of free enterprise principles to create economically and environmentally responsible electric generation within the State of Oregon.*