

# Office of Sustainability



May 6, 2025

House Committee on Energy & Environment  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Subject: Support for Senate Bill 685A

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

I urge your support for SB 685A. This legislation is needed to protect the health and safety of Multnomah County residents.

Hydrogen derived from renewable energy has an important role to play in the clean energy transition. Because hydrogen has novel safety concerns, potential environmental drawbacks, and costs more than other forms of energy it needs close regulatory oversight. Senate Bill 685A begins to deliver that vetting by mandating a right to know for consumers and providing regulatory line of sight into new blending projects.

Safety, environmental concerns, and cost-effectiveness take on heightened concern when residential utility customers are expected to both be the recipients of this novel fuel type and pay for its implementation. The bill sets out the minimum requirement that residential customers be made aware that a new fuel type will be used in their home. This is important because hydrogen gas has different properties than methane gas, which is currently used in the gas system. Hydrogen can corrode pipes and, because it is a smaller molecule, it can leak more easily and is more flammable than methane. Hydrogen can also negatively impact appliances like furnaces and lead to higher emissions of nitrogen oxide which is toxic to humans.

The novelty of hydrogen as a widely utilized fuel type for commercial and residential use, combined with serious safety, environmental, and economic concerns warrant public disclosure. SB 685A delivers the minimum of what Multnomah County ratepayers expect from state agencies: the right to know what types of fuel they are paying for and using in their homes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Wasiutynski".

John Wasiutynski  
Director

Submitted by Tom Powers [tom.powers@multco.us](mailto:tom.powers@multco.us) (503) 348-2021