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Testimony of Lisa Naito in Support of HB 2893 A

When we can increase energy creation from renewables and also support jobs at the same time, it is truly a win for our State. HB 2893 A modestly increases the popular Solar Pilot Program by targeting the small business and commercial sector, and extends the program by one year. I urge your support of the bill.

I advocated for the legislation to set up the Solar Pilot Program in 2009 together with Mark Pengilly and others. Let me take one moment here to appreciate the pro bono advocacy Mark has done each session on behalf of renewable energy policy. The Solar Pilot Program has been very successful and has created a market for solar in combination with other incentive programs. The resulting jobs and development of products has contributed to the lowering of the incentive rate paid for solar electricity by over 40% in the last three years. In the 2011 session, Mark and I were the lead proponents of HB 3516, which removed unnecessary land use zoning requirements for the installation of solar and put solar panel rooftop projects under the jurisdiction of building codes. This was another small step to reduce the costs and time delays for the installation of solar panels on rooftops and we appreciate the work and leadership of your committee on that bill.

This session, we advocated for a modest increase to the Solar Pilot Program in HB 2812. Our hope was to extend the program by 5 MW each year for 3 years. As introduced, HB 2893 repealed the Solar Pilot Program ORS 757.365. We appreciate that Rep. Reardon invited us to participate in the Workgroup and that the participants came together to support a modest extension of the pilot by one year instead of repealing the program. I appreciate the support of all the members of the Workgroup, but especially want to thank Glenn Montgomery of OSEIA and his advocacy for the extension to the Pilot Program. Finally, I want to appreciate the research and analysis provided to the Workgroup by Kathleen Newman of Oregonians for Renewable Energy Policy (OREP.) She compiled rate impact estimates, job analysis and other research for the Workgroup, so that the members could base the policy discussions on facts.

Congresswoman Hooley and I believe that renewable energy creation is needed for our environment, our economy and our national security. Thank you!