

I'm Tom Hammer, Yamhill County resident and a chief petitioner for Initiative Petition 3. This testimony is in opposition to HB-4126A, a bill written to kill IP-3. I want to see IP-3 continue the public process. IP-3 would return hydro-electric power to renewable energy status. The RPS adopted in 2007 allowed only wind and solar to be defined as renewable.

Does anyone believe that hydro electric power is not renewable? The wind does blow, the sun does glow and the rivers do flow. They are all renewable. But, only hydro is reliable every hour of every day. Only hydro electric provides renewable power at affordable rates.

In working this issue I had good, bi-partisan conversations with two Senators of vastly different constituencies. One was from the most urban area and the other from a very rural area of Oregon. I lived in the first senator's neighborhood for 20 years and have had her acquaintance for two decades. I know her friends, some of them very well. They are professionals who live quite comfortably. Children are not a big part of their lives. They fill their lives with altruistic causes. The ecology movement has absorbed most of them. That movement was begun by countries which see capitalism as a rival to be defeated. The second senator told me that it was a shame that the free market for electric power had been corrupted by huge subsidies for inefficient power. But, now he had constituents who had acted on incentives to invest in subsidized power and needed that system to be protected. Associated Oregon Industries, a strong voice on this issue, used to represent a voice for free markets. For decades it was steered by self made business leaders. Their respect for the free market grew local business and attracted new business. Oregon was among this nation's business leaders. That all changed about the time that Enron bought control of PGE. Now we have an AOI dominated by corporatists. AOI took no position in the last presidential election. Oregon's top business lobby couldn't decide who best should lead this country, a successful businessman, or a man with no business experience who is radically transforming the free marketplace. Today's AOI symbolizes corporatism. A tyrannical government is required for corporatism to succeed. A tyrannical government fears a vote of the people. We have such a government in Oregon. This needs to end.

I sincerely thank these two senators for making time to converse with me and for being forthright about their planned votes. Each will vote for the interests of two small, different but powerfully allied groups.

There are about one million hard working, honest, common sense Oregonians who deserve a vote. They can't be here to testify because they are working, raising their kids and caring for the elderly. They don't impose their beliefs or religion on others. They're independent, financially responsible, not government dependent. They don't game the system, they're just forced to pay for it. As their lives get more difficult and their children enter a working world with fewer opportunities they are awakening to the dysfunctional nature of government. A vote yes for 4126A will satisfy a few for whom ecology is a religion and it will satisfy a few who successfully game a system that defies economics, only made possible with money taken from the masses. A yes on HB 4126A will reward the Governor who convened a task force to kill IP-3 and deny the people their vote. If you courageously vote no you may disappoint a few thousand well connected Oregonians; if you vote yes about one million non-vocal Oregonians will continue to be taken for granted. Please vote no, give the citizens a voice and a vote. If not now, when will we stop taking our bedrock population for granted?