



House Energy and Environment Committee
Oregon State Capitol

RE: HB 2447, the Residential Energy Tax Credit

February 10, 2015

Dear Representatives:

Solar Oregon is a nonprofit that promotes solar energy. We represent a network of over 8,500 Oregonians who care about solar, and have worked to promote a clean energy future for 35 years.

We strongly support HB 2447 and encourage its passage.

Harnessing solar power creates good Oregon jobs. With over 130 companies, Oregon's solar power industry includes everyone from manufacturers of solar panels and inverters to equipment distributors and installers. About 2,700 Oregonians work in the solar industry, helping residents take advantage of the abundant natural power across the state.

The RETC is key to make solar finances work for the next several years. Solar Oregon delivers about two dozen Basics of Solar Workshops each year, to around 400 Oregonians. At these workshops, one of the top concerns of attendees is about how financing and incentives work. In follow-up surveys, participants cite financial concerns as a reason they choose not to install solar. Right now, the combination of incentives makes it possible for many to install solar; the RETC is an essential piece.

Industry has done its part in cutting costs. In this partnership between homeowners, the state and industry, industry has worked hard to cut costs. Solar panels cost one-onehundredth what they did 35 years ago, and half of what they did in 2011. Industry will continue to cut costs if we can create the stability and predictability to make sure companies survive.

We must do what we can to avoid instability. There is a term in the solar industry of the "solar coaster" – highly variable costs and incentives. This creates employment instability, a loss of knowledge and skills, and quality control problems.

The bill allows ODOE to scale back incentives if we can get it done for less. In Section 3, subsection (3), the bill authorizes ODOE to provide less incentive as "market conditions warrant."

Thank you for your time, and your service to the state of Oregon.

Sincerely,

Evan Manvel
Executive Director