

3Degrees
American Wind Energy Association
Atkins
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Foundation
Center for Energy Efficiency &
Renewable Technologies
Citizens' Utility Board of Oregon
Climate Solutions
Columbia Gorge
Community College
Community Renewable
Energy Association
DNV GL
EDF Renewable Energy
EDP Renewables
Environment Oregon
Environment Washington
Eurus Energy America
EverPower
GE Energy
Geothermal
Resources Council
Green Mountain Energy
HDR Engineering, Inc.
Iberdrola Renewables
Idaho Conservation League
K&L Gates
Kapla Law PLLC
MAP
Montana Environmental
Information Center
MontPIRG
Natural Resources
Defense Council
NextEra Energy Resources
Northwest Environmental
Business Council
Northwest SEED
NW Energy Coalition
OneEnergy Renewables
Oregon Solar Energy
Industries Association
OSPIRG
Oregon Tech
Orion Renewable Energy
Group LLC
Portland Energy
Conservation, Inc.
Principle Power
REC Silicon
RES America Developments
Solar Oregon
Stoel Rives, LLP
SunPower Corporation
Vestas Americas
Warm Springs Power &
Water Enterprises
Washington Environmental Council
WashPIRG
Western Resource Advocates



**Testimony of Rachel Shimshak, Executive Director, Renewable Northwest
House Committee on Energy and Environment, Supporting HB 4036
February 2, 2016**

Good morning Chair Vega Pederson and members of the Committee.

My name is Rachel Shimshak, and I am the Executive Director of Renewable Northwest, a regional advocacy organization of businesses and public interest groups working to advance responsible renewable resources in the Pacific Northwest.

I am here today to voice our strong support for HB 4036, a bill that will support the economy and the environment.

HB 4036 marks an historic moment for Oregon. It captures the will of the people to clean up our energy supply and puts us firmly on a path to grow our generous endowment of renewable energy resources to meet our needs.

It sends the message that our citizens are ready to transition away from coal resources to a future that keeps the air clean, and supports our treasured quality of life. It continues our tradition of leadership on clean energy.

The current Renewable Standard has given us 8 years of experience in increasing the amount of clean energy in our portfolio. It is a proven policy that has delivered real benefits at modest cost. This bill continues the sustained, orderly development of renewables that has helped our state benefit economically. Projects that have located in rural parts of the state have generated \$150 million in local county benefits, and paid landowner royalties to those farmers and ranchers sponsoring wind, solar, and geothermal projects on their land. That helped sustain those areas and families especially during the great recession. The counties have been able to invest in education programs, public safety, roads, and even given money back to year-round residents (Sherman County).

The positive business climate from the RPS helped attract renewable energy manufacturers, developers, marketers, environmental, and permitting consultants to the urban core as well. It isn't often that a single policy grows the economy in both rural and urban areas. The ramp up to the 50% standard in the bill will continue to attract and keep businesses here.

The dramatic drop in prices for wind and solar over the past five years bodes well for the affordability of the proposal. We commissioned our own financial analysis that showed that implementing HB 4036 is low cost. The bill provides utilities incentives for early action on renewables. The federal government serendipitously helped us underscore this element by extending the federal tax credits for solar, wind and other renewables helping us move forward at even lower cost to customers.

An increased Renewable Standard helps reduce carbon because utilities will always choose the resource with no fuel costs first as they dispatch their system. Each time a wind or solar resource generates a kwh it reduces/displaces fossil fuels in the supply. And that reduces emissions. The more renewables, the less fossil fuel that is burned. Because there are no fuel costs, renewables are like a 30-year mortgage—you know their price at the beginning and it is stable over its lifetime. There is no fuel price volatility.

The intention of the Renewable Standard is to influence the resources utilities use to meet their customers' needs. These decisions affect the power supply for 30-40 years. Without this bill, we might just replace one fossil fuel for another. HB 4036 insures that renewables will make up a substantial portion of the replacement power as coal units retire. We consider that a "no regrets" policy, and that makes a big difference for emissions also.

HB 4036 provides certainty for the utilities and for the market for new resources. When both utilities know that they have to get coal out of the supply and increase renewables, they can turn their attention to getting the job done in the most cost-efficient way instead of worrying that they might be doing something the other one isn't.

Other features of the bill underscore the importance of cost effective energy efficiency and demand response that will help balance the system, and also calls for a Community Solar program to provide access to solar resources for those who may not have a suitable roof, including those in the low income community.

Before I close, I want to say how remarkable it is that the disparate parties who regularly spar with each other in the regulatory process were able to find common cause on this bill. The parties worked hard and honestly with each other. I believe we arrived at a proposal that paves an Oregon path to a clean energy future, one that reflects our history, our experience, our people and our values.

Thank you.