



The Association of Oregon Counties Supports HB 4036 with Amendments

February 2, 2016

The Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) supports HB 4036 with amendments. AOC's goal is to ensure there is a place for Oregon's smaller scale, community-based projects in this sweeping bill that would increase the requirement for renewable energy generation to 50% by 2040.

Since Oregon passed its Renewable Portfolio Standard in 2007, AOC and its member counties have worked with the utilities, renewable energy advocates, environmental organizations, and the private and public sectors to ensure renewable energy development is delivered with environmental sensitivity and to benefit local economies.

Since 2007, large scale development has occurred with wind resources; in recent years solar development has moved forward; and other resource development is beginning to occur. But the complicated process for financing, permitting, and finding opportunities for sale of power has made it difficult to develop smaller scale community-based projects.

The current RPS has an aspirational goal that at least **8% of Oregon's retail electrical load** come from small-scale community renewable energy generation of **20 megawatts** or less. Though we appear to be on track to meet the broader 25% requirement by 2025, the goal of smaller scale projects is lagging considerably. We want to fix that.

The amendment we support today makes the 8% goal a **requirement** for generation by investor owned utilities by 2025. Details of our proposal have been provided with this testimony, and we have met with committee members to explain this proposal.

The bill before us today has a missing component: **it does not require any renewable energy development in Oregon**, with the exception of the community solar provision, which is a good one. While we support this important proposal, we believe strongly that Oregon deserves a healthy energy portfolio, with diverse renewable energy resources of which at least a portion is built in Oregon. The many small scale projects that have occurred have provided economic benefits to all areas of the state, particularly the more rural areas. AOC seeks to increase those economic benefits associated with community-based distributed generation.

Oregonians want renewable energy. They also expect that while we are making strides to eliminate fossil fuel and improve our environment, Oregonians should benefit from added jobs, investment income, and the subsequent tax payments associated with renewable energy development in Oregon.

We encourage your support of HB 4036 with the community-based amendment we have provided.

For more information, contact Mary Stern at mstern@oregoncounties.org or 503-474-7567.