

Rep. Jessica Vega Pederson, Chair
And Committee Members

January 1, 2016

HB 4037 will provide unnecessary incentives to solar energy developers at a time when the state budget is inadequate to cover necessary programs providing for safety, education, transportation and other more critical needs

This bill will place the burden of a cash payment based on production of Solar Developments on Oregon taxpayers. Solar developers are already placing solar developments in Oregon. In fact, as recently as August, 2015, the Idaho Public Utilities Commission reduced the contract lengths for solar energy to two years. Ten solar developments planned for Idaho indicated their intent to simply move the developments to Oregon. Oregon is suffering under the burden of wind and solar developments being built in this state due to the ease in obtaining site certificates and other approvals and the positive political and financial incentives available. Most of these developments, like the 10 planned to produce energy for Idaho are not producing energy for use in this state. Oregon gets no benefit from the energy, gets no credit toward our renewable energy standard, provides the developers with renewable energy certificates and other financial advantages, and the State is subjected to the environmental damages of the developments.

Oregon cannot afford to continue sacrificing our natural resources, financial security and quality of life to produce energy for other states. Oregon already produces significantly more energy than we use. In spite of the fact that 99.8% of that energy is "renewable", the citizens are continually being asked to finance "renewable energy" projects to meet a politically motivated standard that fails to recognize most of the hydro-power we produce as renewable, and fails to give credit for the bulk of the wind and solar energy we produce since it is sent out of state. Oregon's contribution to Global Warming is less than .68% of the US total. We cannot afford to assume responsibility for other states failure to do their share in addressing this issue. It is resulting in a failure of the state to meet other more critical needs due to the drain on the state budget.

It is an insult to the citizens of the state to call this bill an emergency. There is no negative outcome should it not be implemented until 90 days after the end of this short session. The only reason for including an emergency clause is to deny the citizens the opportunity to vote on this bill. This bill should not leave this committee. If it does, it should not include an emergency clause.

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