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To: Members of the House Energy and Environment Committee
From: Rhett Lawrence, Oregon Chapter Sierra Club
Date: February 2, 2016
RE: House Bill 4037

Chair Vega Pederson and Members of the Committee: Good morning, my name is Rhett Lawrence and I'm the Conservation Director for the Oregon Chapter of the Sierra Club. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. On behalf of our more than 22,000 members and supporters in Oregon, I wanted to offer our enthusiastic support for House Bill 4037.

As an organization with a long history working in support of renewable energy in Oregon, we believe that HB 4037 can go a long way toward continuing the expansion of solar power in our state. Solar energy is already a critical component of Oregon's clean energy mix and its importance is only growing. Living in an increasingly carbon-constrained world, we need to be exploiting and promoting renewable energy wherever and whenever we can.

HB 4037 provides Oregon a unique opportunity to dramatically increase the amount of solar energy being produced in Oregon and to do so for just over \$1 million a year for the next five years. This bill will help ensure that 16 to 18 new large-scale solar projects will be built in Oregon over the next two years, which will create hundreds of jobs and pour millions of property tax dollars into the coffers of rural Oregon communities that need it the most.

And importantly for the Sierra Club, as referenced above, we believe this bill will help our state in the absolutely critical need to reduce our carbon emissions. Replacing a significant portion of our fossil fuel mix with solar energy could help us to cut 5 million tons of CO₂ over the next 30 years. And with an estimated total price tag of the program of around \$5.7 million, that's just over a dollar per ton of CO₂, which is an extraordinarily cost-effective way to reduce carbon.

In conclusion, it is time to get serious about fighting climate change in Oregon and weaning ourselves from fossil fuels. Thus, we need to make serious and substantial investments in clean and reliable renewable energy and HB 4037 allows the state to do just that, at a modest price. For these reasons, we strongly support House Bill 4037 and urge this Committee to do the same.

Thank you very much for considering my comments and I'd be happy to answer any questions.