

The Association of Oregon Counties Supports HB 4036-A41

February 22, 2016

The Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) supports HB 4036-A41. 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. The -A41 Amendment (A-41) attempts to fix that.

Section 14 of -A41 makes the 8% goal a **requirement** for small-scale, community renewable energy generation by investor owned utilities by 2035. Section 14 of -A41 also promotes **renewable energy development in Oregon**. We believe strongly that Oregon deserves a healthy energy portfolio, with diverse renewable energy resources 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 supports -A14 as it seeks to increase those economic benefits associated with community-based distributed generation. Although AOC believes an earlier date of 2025 is warranted, we welcome the changes in this amendment and offer to provide assistance on a future interim work group tasked with improving this Clean Energy Plan.

Additionally, AOC supports the removal of limitations on Renewable Energy Credits associated with electricity generated from direct combustion of municipal solid waste found in Section 4(6) in -A14. This will make a great difference to the burner in Marion County.

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-A41.

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