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To: Members of the Senate Business and Transportation Committee

From: Rhett Lawrence, Oregon Chapter Sierra Club

Date: February 20, 2017

RE: Senate Bill 339

Chair Beyer and Members of the Committee: On behalf of the more than 30,000 members and supporters of the Sierra Club in Oregon, I am pleased to provide this written testimony on Senate Bill 339. As an organization with a long history working on energy issues in Oregon, we support this bill and its efforts to bring clarity to the directives of SB 1547, the historic Clean Energy and Coal Transition bill from 2016.

While we support this bill, we believe that it would be improved by an amendment that would implement a 20 megawatt *capacity* cap for biomass cogeneration facilities. Such an amendment would capture the essence of what was intended by the “biomass fix” that was discussed on the record in the 2016 session. And while the Sierra Club does have concerns about certain biomass issues, we believe this bill – and HB 2133 in the House – are simply technical fixes for a policy that is already on the books, so we support this proposal. Indeed, this bill language – especially with the expected amendments – is a way to make sure that any future biomass facilities do not eat up all of the capacity of the 8% small-scale renewable requirement. In other words, it’s a way to be sure that the 8% consists of a diverse portfolio, ideally of wind and solar energy. Without the 20 megawatt capacity cap, we fear that biomass could edge out all other renewables with a single massive facility.

For these reasons, the Sierra Club supports Senate Bill 339 and we urge this Committee to do the same. This is a simple fix to a good policy and we need the clarity that it will provide. Thank you very much for considering our comments and please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance to the Committee.