

Testimony on SB 339 from Doris Penwell, AOC
Senate Committee on Business and Transportation
Monday, February 20, 2017

I represent Association of Oregon Counties (AOC). The bill before you is a proposal that was developed following the February Legislative Session, as a result of passage of SB 1547, the Coal-to-Clean Bill.

At the end of the short session, there was not time to fix the language (proposed in this bill) that appeared in Section 14 of SB 1547. Though no committee heard the intent behind the entirety of the final Section 14 language, the senate and house chairs spoke to the need to fix the biomass co-gen language because it did not provide for a cap of 20 mw for co-gen projects.

Over the summer, AOC, the Community Renewable Energy Association (CREA) and Oregon Forest Industry Council (OFIC) worked together to craft the language before you. Though we have other issues that we feel need to be revisited with regard to the 8% RPS requirement, the language in SB 339 is important because the 8% provisions are about small-scale renewable energy projects that can be sited in and around Oregon communities. We want to be sure that all RPS eligible renewable energy resources are able to develop projects where appropriate. One resource should not be allowed to eat up all the opportunity of all other. This fix only deals with cogeneration projects (production of heat and electricity).

To be clear, the requirement for 8% in the current law, only applies to sales of renewable energy generation to “electric” companies, which in Oregon are Portland General Electric and Pacific Power.

AOC is highly supportive of biomass projects in general, including biomass co-generation. If there is any state that is ripe for this kind of renewable energy production, Oregon is the one! We want this opportunity for investment in and around Oregon communities.

We encourage your support of this provision in the RPS statute: ORS 469.210.