



**Testimony to the House Committee on Energy and Environment
February 5, 2020**

**Jana Gastellum, Program Director, Climate
Oregon Environmental Council**

**Meredith Connolly, Oregon Director
Climate Solutions**

Oregon Environmental Council and Climate Solutions oppose HB 4049.

In 2018, the world's leading scientists issued a report stating the world needs to significantly cut greenhouse gas (GhG) emissions by 2030 to avoid the worst effects of climate change. In order to do that, nations, states, and cities must do everything in their power to reduce emissions, increase energy efficiency, ramp up renewables, and transition to zero-emission transportation.

The main intent of the original Renewable Portfolio Standard (SB 838, passed in 2007) was the generation of new renewable power. For that reason, many pre-existing resources were not included or had time limited windows to register. In 2020, with the worsening climate crisis and need to transition to a clean energy economy, we should not be looking back to change that, as the need for new renewable energy projects has only grown.

Unfortunately, HB 4049 takes the state in the wrong direction by removing the 2011 registration deadline for pre-existing municipal solid waste (MSW) to qualify for Renewable Energy Credit (REC) generation. Doing this would mean that existing power could displace new renewable energy generation at exactly the time when we need more GhG-free power. In addition, burning municipal solid waste is not emissions-free. It emits both anthropogenic and biogenic GhGs. In contrast, solar, wind, and qualifying new hydro do not emit any GhGs. Allowing RECs for even a portion of the plant still has the effect of subsidizing the release of anthropogenic GhGs.

Pre-existing MSW plants had an opportunity to register, but did not. Many other states are adopting ambitious renewable energy targets—including Washington State that recently set a 100% clean standard. In just the last year, nine states have committed to 100% clean energy. Now is not the time to undermine Oregon's renewable energy standard.

We urge a no vote on HB 4049.