



To: Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation
From: Rhett Lawrence, Pacific Northwest Policy Manager
Date: February 11, 2020
RE: House Bill 4036

Co-Chairs Beyer and McKeown, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Rhett Lawrence and I am the Pacific Northwest Policy Manager for Forth. We are a nonprofit trade association that advocates for the advancement of electric, hydrogen, shared, smart, connected, and autonomous mobility. I am pleased to present this written testimony on behalf of our more than 175 members – including auto manufacturers, electric vehicle charging suppliers, industry partners, utilities, local governments, and non-profit environmental organizations – to urge your support for House Bill 4036.

As you know, Oregon has ambitious greenhouse gas reduction goals and we are already behind in meeting them. And given that the transportation sector is now the biggest component of our state's greenhouse gas emissions, it is critical that we take steps to get those transportation emissions headed down – and quickly. Dramatically increasing the use of electric vehicles is one of the most significant steps we can take to get a handle on reducing those transportation emissions.

Forth is thus very supportive of any policy proposals which would speed up our state's transition to an electrified transportation system. In order to achieve widespread adoption of EVs in Oregon, we need to greatly expand the availability of charging stations and other electrical vehicle infrastructure. It is equally evident that as we move toward a future with EVs in every garage and parking lot, we need to be building that grid infrastructure right now.

Thankfully, utilities are already making those investments in EV infrastructure today, and Section 7 of HB 4036 will simply allow them to spread the cost of those investments to their larger base of ratepayers. This ability will allow utilities to make the type of larger, system-wide investments our state needs to put us on the path to our electric vehicle future. The pilot programs from PGE and Pacific Power have been very promising, and now we need to be able to expand those projects out to a much greater scale.

Section 7 also includes the same rate basing language for natural gas utilities for their investments in compressed natural gas infrastructure. Since CNG is a much higher carbon intensity fuel than electricity or hydrogen, Forth would prefer that HB 4036 not provide rate basing authority for investments in CNG.

Despite this concern, we believe that House Bill 4036 can play an important role in getting Oregon on the necessary path to markedly increasing transportation electrification. Forth strongly supports the provisions of the bill that do so and we urge Committee members to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony and I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

FORTH Empowering Mobility

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