



February 4, 2021

To: Senator Lee Beyer, Chair, Senate Committee on Energy and Environment
Members, Senate Committee on Energy and Environment
From: Max Greene, Regulatory & Policy Director, Renewable Northwest
Re: **Support for SB 154**

Dear Chair Beyer and Members of the Committee,

Renewable Northwest is a regional, non-profit renewable energy advocacy organization based in Oregon, dedicated to decarbonizing the region by accelerating the transition to renewable electricity. Our members are a combination of renewable energy businesses and environmental and consumer groups. **Renewable Northwest supports SB 154, which would extend by 6 years the sunset on a program that allows solar project owners to enter payment in lieu of taxes agreements with counties, not to exceed 20 years.**

Oregon's solar payment in lieu of taxes program benefits both Oregon solar development and local governments. The program helps solar developers to avoid challenges in securing financing, because a payment-in-lieu-of-taxes agreement eliminates uncertainties related to property tax liability. It helps local governments by delivering stable and predictable payments from solar developers in years when their tax revenues may otherwise be uncertain due, e.g., to the declining value of a solar project over time. By supporting more solar development in Oregon, SB 154 would support not only Oregon jobs, but also the state's suite of climate and energy policies that prioritize a transition to clean energy.

Renewable Northwest has been following stakeholder conversations about possible amendments to SB 154 and is encouraged by the directions of those conversations. In particular, we would support lowering the payment to \$5,500 and addressing the barriers to community solar projects. In the meantime, we are pleased to support SB 154 and the extension of Oregon's solar payment-in-lieu-of-taxes program to 2028.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Max Greene", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Max Greene
Regulatory & Policy Director
Renewable Northwest