



# HB 2691 Amendment Brief

## Avian Death Prevention in Relation to Windmills

### Summary

The amendment to HB 2691 aims to reduce avian deaths by requiring that the bottom ten meters of windmill turbine towers and one rotor blade of each turbine be painted black in order to increase their visibility. The deadline for compliance for existing windmills is January 1, 2031 and the requirement applies to new construction beginning on March 1, 2022. Research has shown that adding this feature to windmills significantly reduces avian death. This amendment also removes the need for a separate study to be conducted.

### Costs

Wind energy developers and operators will need to absorb the cost of compliance, and determine the least cost-prohibitive manner possible. During the Q&A session following testimony by Dr. Roel May of the Norwegian Institute for Nature Research at a September 2020 House Natural Resources Committee hearing, it was noted that (1) painting during construction is easier, since the windmill is on the ground, and (2) when attached to the hub, painting 4 turbines costs around \$30,000. This means that painting the windmills, either on the ground or already attached, will cost at most around \$7,500 per turbine. No other downsides, environmental or otherwise, have been determined.

### Benefits

Research conducted by Dr. May scientifically proved that adding this feature to windmills significantly reduces avian death. Direct benefits of this amendment include protecting avian species from harms resulting from wind energy generation and better understanding the long-term ways for birds and wind power generation to coexist. Indirect benefits may include decreased biodiversity loss among avian species and improved ecological stability due to the continued presence of predatory avian species. Having this knowledge, and ultimately acting upon it, could allow Oregon to better protect its wildlife, biodiversity, and ecological stability while still increasing its use of renewable energy technology.

*Any correspondence regarding this legislative policy brief, or the amendment to HB 2691, should be sent directly to Ram Goel, at [ram.goelkrishna@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:ram.goelkrishna@oregonlegislature.gov). For further information on HB 2691, please visit: <https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2021R1/Measures/Overview/HB2691>*