



Office of Sustainability

March 22, 2021

Representative Pam Marsh, Chair
House Committee on Energy and Environment
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE, Room D
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Multnomah County Supports HB 2021 and a just transition to 100% Clean Energy for All

Chair Marsh and Members of the Committee:

The Multnomah County Office of Sustainability asks for your support for a just and equitable transition to 100% clean electricity for Oregonians that prioritizes community benefits, family wage jobs, workforce equity, and resiliency. The -1 amendment to HB 2021-1 would set in place important elements to transition to a clean electricity system, and we are hopeful that a subsequent amendment will strengthen the legislation by incorporating language to ensure that the transition is just. A just energy transition will ensure that Oregonians who have been most impacted by COVID-19, wildfires, and other events in the last year will benefit from the investments and opportunities that will get us to the clean energy system we need.

Multnomah County is committed to transitioning to a clean and resilient energy system while centering environmental and energy justice. Our goals go beyond meeting 100% of our electricity and energy needs with renewable energy, and include community benefits through community-based renewables and through partnerships with our environmental justice communities to ensure that they too enjoy the economic, social, and environmental benefits associated with this clean energy transition. Your support for a just and equitable transition to 100% clean electricity is critical for us to meet our local commitments.

Like the rest of Oregon, Multnomah County's community has been impacted by the health and economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and the natural disasters and other events of the last year. These impacts have highlighted for us the importance of an energy transition that translates to economic opportunities for Oregonians and that helps us build a stronger and more resilient energy system.

At the Multnomah County Office of Sustainability, we are greatly encouraged by a process to strengthen the framework in HB 2021-1 that includes multiple stakeholders, and that centers the voices of the frontline-community leaders that have worked hard to bring 100% Clean Energy for All within reach. We strongly hope that subsequent amendments will address strong labor standards to ensure that Oregon's energy transition results in family-wage jobs and builds a strong and richly diverse clean energy workforce. The National Renewable Energy Laboratory has documented that in 2020 utility scale fixed-

tilt solar projects cost less than \$1 dollar per a megawatt hour, with labor cost only representing a very small portion of the overall cost.¹ In short, Oregon can afford strong labor standards.

We also hope to see a framework that facilitates the development of community-based projects and of solutions that can make our communities more resilient. The fires and winter storm of the last year taught us the value and importance of resilience. In a world altered by global warming, the resilience that comes from distributed energy resources and micro-grids is no longer a luxury, but a central component of a grid capable of offering safe, reliable, and high quality electricity service. Finally, we are hopeful that subsequent amendments will more strongly address how we prioritize benefits and avoid harms to environmental justice communities.

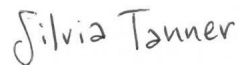
The Multnomah County Office of Sustainability looks forward to continuing to engage in the thoughtful process that will lead to a strong 100% Clean Energy for All, a crucial step for Oregon. We will continue to engage with you and the many other partners and stakeholders working tirelessly to advance the just energy transition that our state needs.

We appreciate your consideration of these comments and ask for your support of a just transition to 100% clean electricity.

Sincerely,



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¹ <https://www.nrel.gov/solar/solar-installed-system-cost.html>