Representative Nancy Nathanson, Chair
House Revenue Committee
Oregon State Legislature

Re: Support for HB 2021 A

Dear Chair Nathanson and Members of the Committee,

The Metropolitan Mayors’ Consortium (MMC) represents the mayors of twenty-five cities in the Portland Metro Area, collectively home to over 1.7 million Oregonians. The MMC writes to express its support for HB 2021, which seeks to transition Oregon’s electricity sector to 100% clean energy no later than 2040.

The MMC supports policies that reduce carbon emissions and air pollution and move Oregon towards meeting its climate goals. Several MMC cities are already working to develop 100% clean energy programs in our local communities, but we recognize that our entire state needs to decarbonize its electrical grid if we are to significantly reduce Oregon’s greenhouse gas emissions. The mayors of the MMC appreciate HB 2021-1’s binding emissions reduction targets of 80% clean by 2030, 90% clean by 2035, and 100% clean by 2040. We also applaud the bill’s prohibition on the construction of new fossil fuel power plants in the state of Oregon.

The MMC believes in the importance of environmental justice, and that clean energy and environmental policy should be designed in ways that protect our state’s most vulnerable communities. It is vital that our state’s 100% clean program does not increase electricity prices for low-income Oregonians. For this reason, the mayors feels strongly that the version of HB 2021 that passes should either include protections for low-income ratepayers, or that HB 2021 is passed in conjunction with HB 2475, which authorizes the Public Utility Commission to consider differential energy burden and other inequities of affordability when setting rates.

The MMC would also like to see a 100% clean policy that delivers the economic development benefits to Oregon communities. Renewable energy development brings family wage jobs and property tax revenue to the communities where projects are built, and we want Oregonians to enjoy these benefits as a result of HB 2021.

As we all work to address the inequities in our state and recover from both the COVID-19 pandemic and devastating wildfire season, the MMC supports policy that will deliver cleaner air for our communities, mitigate the impacts of a changing climate, and support local economic development. HB 2021 endeavors to do just that.

Thank you for your commitment to a clean energy future and your consideration of our testimony.
Sincerely,

The Mayors of the MMC