

Submitter: Sophie Geyer
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB685
Date: February 9, 2025
To: House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment
Subject: Support SB 685 Hydrogen Blending Oversight and Public Notice

Dear Chair Lively, Vice–Chair Gamba, Vice–Chair Bobby Levy, and Members of the House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment,

My name is Sophie Geyer, and I live in Southeast Portland. Oregon's current regulatory framework lacks sufficient oversight and notice requirements for blending hydrogen into natural gas residential home pipelines. This regulatory gap poses significant risks for ratepayers, public safety, and environmental health. This is why I support SB 685 to provide hydrogen blending oversight and public notice.

As a customer of NW Natural Gas myself I have significant concerns about the hydrogen blending experimentation occurring in my neighborhood. Hydrogen ignites more easily than methane, making any gas leaks more dangerous and increasing the risk of explosion. Higher percentage blends (above 6%) can even result in a greater risk of appliance malfunction and pipeline leaks, compounding this problem.

In implementing this experiment, NW Natural did not once notify me of their hydrogen blending or its associated risks, despite my being a paying customer of theirs. Customers and community members have a right to know about changes that impact the safety of our homes and neighborhoods. And, especially given that NW Natural operates as a legal monopoly whose service we cannot simply opt out of, residents deserve to have a say in how or if these changes are implemented.

I strongly urge you to support SB 685.

Sincerely,
Sophie Geyer
Portland, Oregon